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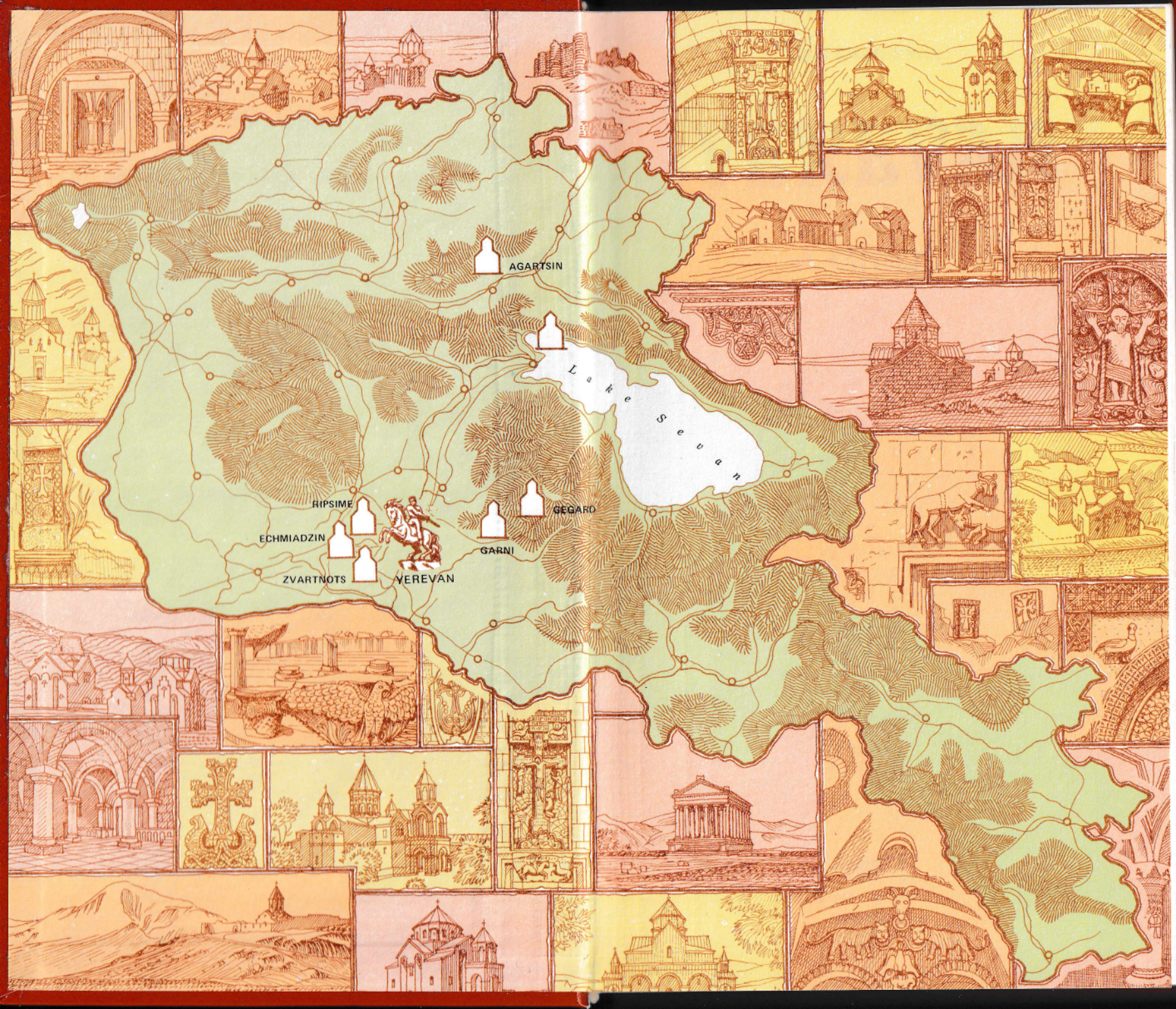
YEREVAN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YEREVAN

A GUIDE

Progress Publishers
Moscow

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. . . There have been many cities in Armenia in the course of its history, including legend-shrouded Ani (one of Armenia's ancient capitals) but none has or could have been built within a few decades and as finely as Yerevan.

The city of Yerevan, though as old as Babylon and Rome, is dear to us not so much as a forefather, or father but as a son and grandson reared by us.

What we call Yerevan today—Lenin Square, the main thoroughfare now under construction, the new residential districts in the north and south-west, each as large as old Yerevan of the 1920s, the new streets, the State Opera House, the Matenadaran and the statue of David of Sassoun—is incomparably younger than Soviet Armenia and some of its districts are even younger than our children and grandchildren.

. . . In 1968, we celebrated the 2750th anniversary of Yerevan. Our guests from all over the world drank Armenian wines and the cold beer and were not always aware that about two and a half thousand years ago the first inhabitants and guests of the fortress town of Erebuni had also drunk wine and beer in the same place.

They drank wine made from the vines and refreshing beer, which the historian Xenophon tasted and described in his **Anabasis** *at a later date.*

. . . On the 2750th anniversary of Yerevan, we had, I think, some guests from Rome but none from Carthage, Nineveh or Babylon because, like other Yerevan's contemporaries, they had been reduced to ashes. But one should remember that we celebrated the anniversary of Yerevan not so much for its antiquity, as because it has survived and has been given a new lease of life.

. . . Yerevan is only a city, but it contains many different towns and a thousand different types of Yerevanians, ranging from the old townsfolk and those who moved from Armenian villages, to the newcomers from Beirut, New York, Aleppo, Marseilles, Teheran, Athens, Milan and Cairo. . .

Each of them is in his own way "dissatisfied" with Yerevan when he doesn't find what he is used to in his city; each of them sees to it that all the best things found in the place he came from should also appear in Yerevan.

This in itself might well explain why Yerevan is becoming more beautiful every day.

For the first time in its age-old history, for over half a century now, Yerevan is being built at an unprecedented rate, instead of being repeatedly destroyed and reduced to ruins!

. . . Even this small piece of land known as Armenia has had several old capitals in the past—Armavir, Artashat, Dvin and Vagharshapat, but Yerevan is the best and happiest of them.

Gevorg Emin

From his book **Seven Songs About Armenia**

SOME INFORMATION AND PRACTICAL ADVICE

ARMENIA: THE REPUBLIC

Soviet Armenia (the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic) is situated in southern Transcaucasia and occupies 29,800 square kilometres, approximately 0.13 per cent of the territory of the USSR. It is bordered to the north and east by the Georgian and Azerbaijanian Soviet Republics, and to the west and south-west by Turkey and Iran. Armenia is the smallest of the Soviet republics, being only 360 kilometres in length and 200 kilometres in breadth. You might think that in a car you could cover that distance in a day, but not in Armenia, land of mountain peaks and dizzy passes, plunging ravines and extinct volcanoes. The average height above sea level here is almost 1,800 metres, which doubtless explains why Armenia's air is so clear and cool. The highest mountain in the republic is Mount Aragats (4,090 m.), its top slopes emerging from their snowy carpet in late summer, and then only for a very short time.

Armenia is by right called the land of sunshine, the average annual number of sunshine hours in the Ararat Valley, for instance, being 2,700, almost as many as in Egypt. Yet because of specific geographical features, this southern spot, on the same latitude as Spain, can be as cold as minus 46° Centigrade, although admittedly extremely rarely, and then only in some districts. Generally speaking, there are many different types of climate within Armenia because of its mountainous terrain. In the valleys and foothills (precisely where Yerevan is situated), the climate is dry and continental, with a hot summer and moderately cold winter. The average July temperature is 24-26° C, and the average January temperature— minus 5° C.

The best season in Armenia is autumn, when there is a long spell of clear weather, when the bountiful harvest of grapes, fruit and vegetables has been gathered in, the young wine ferments, gathering strength in oak barrels, and the time of noisy, joyful weddings arrives.

Armenia has many rivers, which, bounded by steep ravines, flow rapidly and are consequently unnavigable. This, on the other hand, makes them extremely valuable producers of electricity and irrigators. The largest river in the Armenian foothills is the Araks, the inspiration of many songs and tales, and connected with many legends and traditions.

There are over 100 mountain lakes in Armenia. Lake Sevan, the largest of the high mountain lakes, and the highest of the large lakes, is situated at a height of almost 2,000 metres above sea level.

Approximately 13 per cent of Armenia's territory is forest, and is to be found mainly in the north-east and in the mountainous Zangezur Area. The republic's wildlife is rich and varied, and there are many extremely rare species of bird and animal.

The Armenian SSR is one of the USSR's 15 sovereign republics, with a population of three million. While Armenians make up most of the population (88.6 per cent), Azerbaijanis, Russians, Kurds, Ukrainians and people of other nationalities are also resident here.

There are 24 towns and cities and 33 urban settlements within the republic, which is divided into 36 administrative districts. Armenia has been presented with high awards for its achievements in socialist construction: three Orders of Lenin, the Order of the October Revolution and the Order of Friendship Between Peoples.

Yerevan is the capital of Soviet Armenia. The city is situated at a height of 950-1,200 metres above sea level, on the river Razdan which flows from Lake Sevan, and 50 kilometres from legendary Mount Ararat. The majestic summit of this biblical giant and the panorama of the Ararat Valley are an intrinsic part of the city's landscape.

Yerevan, as we have already noted, has a dry and continental climate, with a hot summer and temperate winter. The average annual temperature is the same as in Paris, London, Turin and Baltimore. Yerevan's average summer temperature is similar to that in Barcelona, Florida and Algiers, while its winter temperature is like that in Leningrad and Helsinki.

SOME PRACTICAL HINTS

You are always confronted by a multitude of questions, such as how to get there, what to take, what small gifts to arm yourself with, when about to set out on a journey. Answers to these and

any other questions can be obtained at the Intourist branch in your country. The staff there will tell you about regulations concerning tourist visas to the Soviet Union and customs procedure.

How to get there. Yerevan is Armenia's main transport centre: it is linked by rail to Baku (capital of Azerbaijan) and Tbilisi (capital of Georgia) and six major republican and national highways run through the city.

Tourists usually choose to reach Yerevan by air: there are direct flights to and from 40 Soviet cities. There are international flights from Beirut (Lebanon) and Aleppo (Syria).

Here is a list of flight times from the major Soviet tourist centres to Yerevan in hours and minutes:

Moscow	2-30
Leningrad	4-30
Riga	5-05
Vilnius	4-35
Kiev	3-20
Minsk	4-30
Odessa	2-10
Baku	1-10
Tbilisi	0-35

City transport. Yerevan's city transport services comprise an underground railway (Metro), buses, trolleybuses and trams. In contrast to most other Soviet cities the standard fare, irrespective of distance travelled, is four kopecks, except on the Metro, where your journey will cost five kopecks. You will have to purchase tickets in advance, which you then punch yourself on the bus, trolleybus or tram. These can be bought at all newspaper stands and at the cash desks of food and consumer goods shops.

The taxi fare is 20 kopecks per kilometre, plus 20 kopecks service charge. There are also fixed-route taxis, comfortable minibuses, in which the fare is 20 kopecks irrespective of distance travelled.

What to take. There is no simple answer to this question, because everything depends on the time of year. You should remember that in Yerevan it can be as hot as 40° C. in summer and as cold as -20° C. in winter.

If you are travelling in summer, remember to pack a sunhat, sunglasses and swimming costume. In spring and autumn a warm sweater, shawl and umbrella could prove useful.

As inexpensive gifts you could take some postcards with views of interesting places in your country, booklets and badges.

Going shopping. This presents no problem at all, for there are dozens of department stores and specialised shops with a wide

range of gifts and souvenirs, such as embossed articles, pottery, carpets, items of jewellery made of gold, silver, German silver, precious and semi-precious stones, curiously shaped watches, and also the unique wares of Armenian craftsmen. Soviet currency must be used in all shops except the special foreign currency shop "Tsitsernak" (8, Sayat-Nova Avenue).

Useful tips. The time in Yerevan is one hour ahead of Moscow time. So, when it is 12:00 in Yerevan, it is 11:00 in Moscow, Leningrad, Riga, Vilnius, Kiev and Minsk; 10:00 in Warsaw, Sofia, Helsinki and Athens; and 9:00 in Berlin, Paris, London, Rome, Prague, Budapest, Geneva, Belgrade and Oslo.

As in the rest of the Soviet Union, Saturdays and Sundays are days of rest. The official holidays, also non-working days, are: New Year's Day (January 1), International Women's Day (March 8), International Solidarity Day (May 1 and 2), Victory Day (of the Soviet nation in World War II) (May 9), Constitution Day (October 7) and the Anniversary of the Great October Revolution (November 7 and 8).

November 29, the anniversary of the establishment of Soviet power in Armenia, is also an annual holiday in the republic.

BITS AND PIECES

In Armenia you will get to know the people well, and not just through books and stories. Over the centuries the Armenians have retained specific national character traits and physical features. Usually they are of average height or taller, sturdily built, olive-skinned, with dark hair and large eyes screened by long lashes. They are industrious, energetic and quick witted; they are fond of crafts and have a gift for languages. Like all Caucasians, they are temperamental and hot-tempered, but they never bear a grudge; they appreciate a sense of humour, love children and are deeply attached to the family. Yerevan constantly has the lowest divorce rate of all the Union Republic capitals.

The Armenian people make good friends and are hospitable, which latter feature they show by their good will, and eagerness to help and devote attention to guests: they always give them a heartfelt welcome and feed them well.

Eating in Armenia. Some strictly observed customs have come down through the ages, and meals may seem somewhat prolonged to Europeans.

Before sitting down to the feast, the most respected, experienced and witty of the guests is chosen to be the *tamada*,

who presides over the table. As a rule, he raises the first glass to the person being fêted or the guest of honour. Then toasts are drunk to each of the guests in turn, the *tamada* ensuring that seniority is observed, and that none of those present are neglected. It is customary for the person being toasted to thank all those who have complimented him and to drain his glass last. Toasts are drunk to all kinds of things and people: to parents, children, friendship, happiness. A resourceful *tamada*, or any of the guests with his permission, can think up all manner of toasts. The last glass is always drained to the hosts and their home.

Toasts are pronounced standing, and every speaker seems to try to outdo the preceding one, although not in the amount of drink. Armenians generally drink a lot, but they know when to stop, and it is considered quite disgraceful to be unsteady on one's feet.

Armenian cooking is very varied and can undoubtedly satisfy the most exacting gourmet. Hors d'oeuvres are usually comprised of many different salads, beans, cold meets, poultry, cheeses and *sudzhukh* (Armenian sausage with a distinctive spicy taste and smell).

Of the soups, creamed soups (*katnapur, spas, tanapur*) and the original and tasty *bozbash* (mutton soup) and *chikhirtma* (chicken soup) are the most commonly served.

Dolmas (mince and rice wrapped in vine leaves) are a very popular main dish. They are also delicious stuffed with apples, quince and vegetables. Another favourite dish is *kyufta* (meatballs made of tenderloin, boiled meat served with melted butter.)

The Caucasian kebab (*khorovats* in Armenian), however, still holds pride of place. It is made with specially chosen pieces of mutton or pork, threaded onto a skewer and roasted over a fire. The kebabs are served with baked tomatoes, aubergines and sweet red peppers.

Trout from Lake Sevan (the Armenians call it *ishkhan,* "prince of fish") is a great delicacy. There is a saying "there is no room for any other fish when *ishkhan* is on the table". All kinds of fresh greenery and appetising condiments and sauces are held in great esteem. It is worth remembering that Armenian dishes contain a lot of salt, pepper and garlic.

In Armenian the words to "eat bread" often replace the expressions to have breakfast, lunch or supper. This is because bread is an important part of the Armenian meal. The traditional national bread is called *lavash,* a thin, flat cake baked in earthenware ovens. In the country-side people still observe the ancient custom of baking *lavash* in the autumn to be stored for the winter. It is dried, stacked in piles and covered; in this way it

can be kept for several months. Moistened with water, it immediately regains its freshness.

Armenian housewives take great pleasure in baking all kinds of pastries, sweetmeats and jams. You will nearly always find fresh and dried fruits, nuts and other gifts of their native land on the table.

Wines and brandies. The art of wine-making has existed in Armenia from time immemorial. You may indeed recall that after the Great Flood Noah cultivated the first vine here, in the foothills of Mount Ararat. Many archaeological finds, manuscripts and old household utensils found indicate that wine was made on a wide scale when the state of Urartu (ninth to sixth centuries B. C.) existed on the territory of ancient Armenia. The wine-making equipment of those times was so sophisticated that much of it continued to be used until the beginning of this century with only minor improvements.

At present the Yerevan wine processing plant is one of the largest of such enterprises in the USSR, producing 38 brands of wine. Armenian ordinary wines are matured for from three months to one year, fine wines for from two to six years, and collectors' wines for more than six years.

Here are some of their names to help you in your choice:

Light table wines: white— *Airum, Lori, Razdan, Araks, Oktemberyan, Megradzor*; red —*Areni, Norashen, Artashat, Garni.*

Strong table wines: *Voskevaz* and *Echmiadzin*, both white.

We recommend that dry white wines should be drunk chilled at 10-12° and red wines at 16-18°.

Semisweet wines (served with all dishes, especially vegetables): white: *Megri, Voskeat*; red— *Aigestan, Vernashen.*

Fortified wines: *Aigeshat, Oshakan* (madeira type) and the sherry *Ashtarak*, which is considered the best in the country.

Sweet and liqueur wines: *Arevik, Saperavi, Aigeshat, Arevshat* (malaga type).

Armenian brandies are held in high repute both in the Soviet Union and abroad. The spacious cellars of the Yerevan Brandy Distillery are stocked with oak barrels containing spirits "born" at the beginning of the century. Experts combine old spirits with younger ones to create high quality brandies.

Ordinary brandies carry little stars on their labels, each one of which denotes one year of maturation.

Armenian fine brandies are constant winners at international competitions, and you will no doubt have an opportunity to sample them yourselves. We will therefore just note that the recipe for the first of the fine Armenian brandies, *Yubileiny,* was created in 1937 in honour of the 20th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. *Akhtamar* is wonderfully smooth

with a delightful aroma. *Armenia* (45°) combines the very best spirits and has a stable bouquet. *Dvin* is stronger still at 50°, but this does not affect its smooth and subtle bouquet. The strongest, *Yerevan* (57°), is made from many different matured spirits. Among these, *Prazdnichny* (45°), made from the very oldest spirits, seems very mild.

And finally just a few words about non-alcoholic beverages, mineral waters, in which Armenia abounds. *Dzhermuk, Arzni, Ankavan, Lichk, Bzhni,* and *Dilizhan* each of which has valuable medicinal qualities and a pleasant taste, are all drunk at table.

Now that you have gleaned some general information about Armenia, we offer you a brief history of Yerevan, its capital, which will help you to understand the country, the city and their people better.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Until comparatively recently, there were many guesses, hypotheses, and legends, but no concrete proof, about when Yerevan, one of the world's most ancient cities, was founded. Only in 1950 did the hill Arin-berd, now within the city boundaries, where excavations were begun back in the last century, yield an alluminating discovery, enabling Armenian scholars to establish the date of the origins of Armenia's capital.

A large basalt flagstone bearing an Urartu cuneiform inscription was discovered by the expedition led by Professor Konstantin Oganesyan. When deciphered the inscription informed us that in 782 B. C. the Urartu king Argishti I had built the fortress Erebuni "to increase the might of his country Biainy and as a deterrent to hostile countries. . ."

It is interesting to note that something was already known of the fortress city of Erebuni, founded by Argishti I in the fifth year of his rule, from the so called Khorkhov inscription found in 1916 on the shores of Lake Van (now in Turkey). The script mentioned the city Erebuni with a population of 6,600 but did not indicate where it was situated. Mention of Erebuni is also found in the cuneiform inscription discovered during excavations at Karmir-blur, another large hill near Yerevan.

An ancient settlement with its streets and dwellings was found next to the fortress Erebuni at the beginning of the 1950s. Linguists have proved that the word "Erebuni" became gradually transformed into "Yerevan".

The Armenians directly inherited the culture existing in the Urartu state: they adopted and subsequently developed their construction and metal-working techniques and potting, agricultural, live-stock farming and irrigation methods.

With the emergence of the Armenian state (sixth century B. C.), the role of the Ararat Valley in the economic life of the country grew considerably. Here, in the shelter of Mount Ararat, new large towns, famous for their crafts, including Armavir, Artashat, and Dvin, grew up. But Yerevan (Erebuni) was for a long time to come to be the economic centre because of its situation on important trade routes.

Yerevan is first mentioned in seventh-century manuscripts dated just prior to the Arab invasion of Armenia. Although they laid siege to Yerevan, they were unable to capture the fortress

city. The next two centuries were a difficult time for the Armenian people, for Arab domination drastically retarded the country's economic development.

During the Bagratid dynasty in the ninth and tenth centuries, Armenia entered a relatively peaceful period conducive to renewed economic development. Not for long, however, for the middle of the eleventh century saw the start of another time of bloodshed: invasions by the Turks and Seldzhuks, the Mongol-Tartar conquest and prolonged war between Persia and Turkey on Armenia's territory. All this obviously had a detrimental effect on Yerevan, one of Armenia's richest trading cities.

In 1554 the Turks captured the city and literally razed it to the ground, visiting cruel reprisals upon its inhabitants. At the beginning of the seventeenth century Yerevan again became a battle site when the Persian army, led by Shah Abbos I, laid siege to the city, where Turkish troops were billeted, and captured it in 1604. The war, however, led to defeat for the Persians, and as they retreated they again set fire to the city and bore away all its inhabitants, most of whom perished en route to Persia.

By the treaty signed in 1639, which concluded the long war which had devastated whole areas of Armenia, the western part of the country went to Turkey, and the eastern, including Yerevan, to Persia.

In 1735 the city became the capital of the Persian vassal khanate of Yerevan, founded in 1604 and ruled by sardars with unlimited powers, appointed by the Shah.

The burden of maintaining the luxurious sardar court and the many officials and soldiers billeted in the city weighed heavily on the inhabitants of Yerevan and the entire khanate. As the sardars tried to imitate the Shah's court in every way, the expense was not inconsiderable.

Yerevan's trade nevertheless gradually revived and cottage industries developed. Goods from Yerevan began to appear in Tbilisi, capital of neighbouring Georgia, in the Azerbaijani towns of Shemakha and Gyandzh and in the markets of the countries of Asia Minor.

The cruel foreign yoke could not break the freedom-loving spirit of the Armenian people. Their long history is one of struggle and victory, of suffering and joy. Despite the policy of extermination

maintained by the invaders, the Armenians with great tenacity maintained their customs and language and developed their own unique culture. Armenia was the first country in the world to declare, in 301, Christianity its official religion. In 396, the scholar Mesrop Mashtots invented the Armenian alphabet, which is used to this day. The first phrase written in Armenian ran: "To know wisdom and instruction, to understand reason expressed."

Ancient Armenian architects have given the world masterpieces such as the heathen temple of Garni (first century), the cathedral in Echmiadzin (fourth century), the churches of St. Ripsime (seventh century), Zvartnots (seventh century) and Agartsin (eleventh century), and the cave churches in Gegard (thirteenth century). There are many relics from history for you to see as you travel around the republic.

In the tenth to thirteenth centuries, universities began to appear in Armenia, the most famous being those at Ani, Gladzor and Tatev.

The first theatre in Armenia was founded over two thousand years ago. According to the Greek historian Plutarch, the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides were performed in Artashat, the then capital.

The Armenian people fought their subjugators with selfsacrifice, but were unable to overcome them alone during this period of military and feudal despotism. From the beginning of the seventeeth century many progressive Armenians began to speak ever more frequently of their northern neighbour, seeing the salvation of their country in a close alliance with mighty Russia.

Union with Russia was favoured by geographic, political and strategic interests, and also by the economic and cultural links of the Armenian and Russian peoples, dating back to the time of Kievan Rus, the early feudal state of the ninth to twelfth centuries. Russia had more than once supported the Armenian people in their national liberation struggle. In 1826, as a result of Persia's violation of the peace treaty, the Russo-Persian war broke out, which culminated in the signing of the Turkmanchai Treaty of 1828, by which Eastern Armenia and Yerevan, taken by Russian forces in October, 1827, became part of Russia. Khachatur Abovyan, great Armenian nineteenth century writer,

wrote in delight at the time: "Blessed be the hour when the blessed Russian foot stepped upon our sacred soil."

Yerevan became the administrative centre of the Armenian *oblast* — an administrative district in tsarist Russia. At that time the city comprised 1,730 houses, 7 churches, 8 mosques, 7 caravanserais, 850 trading stalls, and had a population of 11,463.

With Eastern Armenia's incorporation into Russia the threat of physical annihilation, devastating raids and attacks disappeared; Russia, moreover, was more economically, socially and culturally developed than either Persia or Turkey. Armenians began to return *en masse* from other countries to their homeland. 140,000 people moved to Eastern Armenia in 1828 alone.

Life in Yerevan settled down. In 1840 it became the centre of the Yerevan *uyezd,* and in 1849 of the newly formed Yerevan *gubernia* (both administrative districts in tsarist Russia, the latter larger and more important than the former). The city increased in cultural as well as economic importance: in 1837 a religious seminary and in 1850 a school for girls were opened, a telegraph link was established with Tbilisi in 1864, and a year later a highway was laid from Yerevan to Tbilisi; the first printed press was built in 1876, a grammar school and a teaching college were opened in 1881, and a municipal hospital set up in 1890.

Yet despite all this Yerevan remained a small town with a labyrinth of winding narrow streets in which low pisé houses were crowded one on top of each other. All attempts to improve the town's facilities came to nothing. A plan to build several central streets, drawn up in the 1850s, lay for many long years in officials' offices, and when eventually it was approved it became apparent that there was no money for the construction. It is a curious historical fact that the city fathers publicly auctioned one of Yerevan's squares, but the sum of money received was not sufficient and the work to improve the gubernia centre had once again to be postponed.

The residents used the water from the two rivers, the Razdan and Gedar. The scandalous lack of sanitation, mountains of refuse and rubbish, dirty markets and streets all led to outbreaks of epidemics. The single hospital was huddled in a small house, and the cost of treatment in private hospitals was beyond the

means of ordinary people. It is not surprising that the average life expectancy of Yerevan's citizens was only 35 to 40.

But the Yerevan *gubernia* was gradually drawn within the orbit of capitalism, which was developing in the Russian Empire, and this helped the area's economic growth. Cotton, shoe and silk factories and wine presses and brandy distilleries began to appear, crafts and cottage industry revived. Copper ore mining began again in Alaverdi and Kafan. In 1902 the railway line between Tbilisi, Alexandropol (Leninakan) and Yerevan, which helped strengthen trade and economic links with Central Russia, was opened.

Progressive Russian culture also had a major influence in Armenia. From the first half of the nineteenth century many works by great Russian writers were translated into Armenian, including those by Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov, Nikolai Gogol, Ivan Turgenev, Fyodor Dostoyevsky and others. The Russian public in their turn were very interested on Armenia's rich history and art.

In the 1860s many Armenian public and political figures joined the revolutionary democratic movements in Russia. Mikael Nalbandyan (1829-66), outstanding patriot, writer, publicist and follower of the great Russian philosophers Nikolai Chernyshevsky and Alexander Herzen, was the leader and ideologist of the Armenian revolutionary democratic movement. He it was who wrote prophetically: "We can boldly call the freedom being born in Russia freedom for mankind!"

Marxist ideas began to reach Armenia at the end of last century. In 1887 Marx's and Engels' Manifesto of the Communist Party was translated into Armenian, and in 1898 the first Marxist societies were founded. Naturally, Yerevan, as the *gubernia* centre, also became the centre of the Armenian social democratic movement. The Bolshevik organisation formed here over the period 1903-05.

The wave of the first Russian bourgeois democratic revolution of 1905-07 reached Transcaucasia. In the spring workers and clerks in a number of enterprises in Yerevan went on strike, and in the autumn Yerevan workers took part in the All-Russia political strike in October, 1905. Stepan Shahumyan, an outstanding revolutionary and Lenin's disciple and helper, was chosen by the

Yerevan Bolshevik organisation to be their delegate at the Fourth Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party in Stockholm in 1906.

During the First World War, Armenian Bolsheviks, true to Lenin's ideas, protested against the unleashing of the bloody conflict by imperialist forces. The Armenian people suffered a great tragedy during those years: the Turkish government, taking advantage of the military actions of the German forces, issued a special order on April 24, 1915, to exterminate the Armenians of Western Armenia, then part of Turkey. As a result of the monstrous slaughter, over 1.5 million people were killed and more than 600,000 were driven into the Mesopotamian deserts, where most of them perished. 300,000 took refuge in Russia, while some of the refugees settled in the Middle East, Europe and America. Prominent public figures, scientists and representatives of the arts condemned the action as barbarous. The angry voices of Karl Liebknecht, Vasil Kolarov, Fridtjof Nansen, Romain Rolland, Anatole France, Maxim Gorky and many others, demanding an end to the disgraceful crime, rose from the pages of newspapers and resounded from the stands of parliaments and public meetings. The population of Eastern Armenia was beyond the reach of the reactionary Turkish government, but as subsequent events were to show, the Armenian people still had much to go through before becoming genuinely free.

The victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in 1917 put an end to the classes and national repression of the peoples of Russia. Soviet power did not immediately triumph in Transcaucasia (Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia), however, because of the complex situation there. Power was seized by petty bourgeois national parties, supported by foreign interventionists. In Armenia, in 1918, the bourgeois Dashnaktsutyun party came to power and declared the country an independent republic. Anarchy reigned. The economy, weak enough as it was, collapsed completely: towns were devastated and villages ruined. Widespread hunger and epidemics literally mowed people down. Over one-third of the republic's population died from starvation in 1918-19 alone. One Western newspaper wrote: "In a few years time people will probably talk about the Armenians as about an extinct race."

The workers and peasants of Armenia, led by the Bolsheviks, stubbornly fought the hated dashnak government. In May, 1920, there was an armed uprising which established Soviet power in some Armenian towns, but with the help of their West European allies, the dashnaks managed to suppress the revolt and its leaders were shot.

In September, 1920, Turkey again attacked Armenia, capturing almost two-thirds of the country's territory in just a few days. On November 29, 1920, the workers of Armenia, led by the Bolsheviks, and supported by the Red Army, overthrew the dashnak government. Armenia was declared a Soviet Socialist Republic.

Lenin followed events in Transcaucasia closely and on December 2, 1920, sent a telegram to Sarkis Kasyan, chairman of the Armenian Revolutionary Committee, congratulating the workers of Soviet Armenia on their liberation from imperialist repression. The Armenian people, now in total control of their destiny, set out on the path of socialist change.

The young republic inherited an almost non-existent economy, and Soviet Russia once again held out a helping hand. Although herself devastated by the imperialist and civil wars, she sent Armenia trainloads of grain, medicines, fuel and industrial machinery from Moscow, Petrograd (Leningrad), Ivanovo-Voznesensk and Baku. In his letter of April 14, 1921, "To the Comrades Communists of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Daghestan and the Mountaineer Republic", Lenin set out a programme for economic, political and cultural construction in those republics. Armenia was able to begin building a new life thanks to the help of Soviet peoples.

At the First Armenian Congress of Soviets held in Yerevan in 1922, Alexander Myasnikyan (1886-1925), prominent member of the Communist Party and head of the republic's government, had every reason to declare:

"We will transform the Ararat Valley, known as the vale of tears, into the vale of roses, the vale of happiness. We will do this in a single fraternal union with other Soviet peoples."

On March 12, 1922, a treaty was signed by which Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia formed a federative alliance. From that date until December 5, 1936, Armenia was part of the

Transcaucasian Federation (TSFSR), and as such on December 30, 1922, became part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In 1936, the TSFSR, having accomplished all the aims it had been set, was abolished. Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia became independent Union republics within the USSR.

In a short period of time Soviet Armenia, once a backward outlying area of tsarist Russia which even had to import needles, made a truly gigantic leap forward. In the 'twenties the textile and sewing industries began to establish themselves, the first electric power stations were built and drainage canals laid; machine engineering began to develop in the 'thirties. The establishment of the Soviet Union's first synthetic rubber production plant was a major achievement. Concepts such as unemployment and illiteracy disappeared forever; by 1940 the republic's population had doubled, while that of its capital reached 250,000.

In June, 1941, nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union; more than half a million Armenians fought alongside the other Soviet people on the frontlines.

104 Armenians were awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union for their deeds during the war years, and fearless pilot Nelson Stepanyan, who perished in battle over the Baltic, was twice awarded the title. 23 Armenians were made full bearers of the Order of Glory, the highest military rank-and-file decoration. The republic's working people supplied the money for a tank column and aircraft squadrons, and the country sent several national divisions to the front. The Taman infantry division fought all the way from the Caucasus to Berlin.

The republic provided the Soviet Union with talented military commanders who made a major contribution to the nazi defeat. They include Marshal of the Soviet Union Ivan Bagramyan, Admiral of the USSR Navy Ivan Isakov, Marshal of the Tank Forces Amazasp Babadzhanyan and Marshal of the Air Force Sergei Khudyakov (Khamferyants). Armenian soldiers were active in the resistance movements of Western and Eastern Europe. Misak Manushyan, poet and member of the Communist Party, after whom a street in Paris is named, covered himself with lasting glory in the French Resistance; Ermine Razkratlyan, a partisan from Bulgaria, gave her life in the struggle against the

nazis, and Mashtots Dashtoyan, born in Armenia, became a national Italian hero.

Even during the war the republic's economy continued to grow despite the difficult conditions. New electrical machinery construction, tyre, clock and other factories were built, especially in Yerevan. Even today they are among the largest in the Soviet Union.

After the Second World War the republic and its capital began to develop rapidly. In a mere few decades the city became one of the major industrial, scientific, and cultural centres of Transcaucasia. Its plants and factories produce electric motors, mobile electric power stations, precision lathes, cars, electric light bulbs, synthetic rubber, car covers, aluminium, clocks and watches, furniture, knitted goods, ready-to-wear clothes, shoes, canned produce, wine and brandies. You will get to know the city's industry better during your visit to the Exhibition of the Republic's Economic Achievements.

Yerevan is not just a city of workers and engineers, students and scholars; it is also a city of poets, artists, composers and actors.

Several major publishing houses in Yerevan publish a total of 11 million copies of over 1,100 titles of fiction, political and scientific literature annually. Armenian readers can now read in translation the works of Karl Marx, Frederick Engels and Lenin, the classic Russian writings of Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov, Ivan Turgenev, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Lev Tolstoy and Anton Chekhov and works by authors from all the Union republics.

A list of foreign writers published in Armenian includes Homer, Sophocles, Dante, Boccaccio, Byron, Percy Shelley, Wolfgang Goethe, Heinrich Heine, Honore de Balzac, Victor Hugo, Charles Dickens, Henryk Sienkiewicz, Jack London, Theodore Dreiser, Ernest Hemingway, Erich Maria Remarque, Yaroslav Hašek and Karel Čapek.

The city has 119 libraries, the largest of which is the Myasnikyan State Library of Armenia, with 6,550,000 volumes.

25 newspapers with a daily circulation of 1,309,000 are published in Yerevan in Azerbaijani and Kurdish as well as in Armenian and Russian. 88 magazines and other periodicals with an annual circulation of almost 20 million are also published in the city.

Yerevan's eight theatres offer interesting and varied entertainment, of a standard high enough to satisfy the most exacting lovers of the arts. The Spendiarov Theatre of Opera and Ballet has a varied repertoire and famous artistes from various countries often perform here along with the local company. The Sundukyan Academic Theatre, opened in January, 1922, always boasts capacity audiences. The Yerevan Armenian Dramatic Theatre, the Stanislavsky Russian Theatre, the Djabarla Azerbaijani Theatre, the musical comedy hall, the children's theatre and puppet theatre are always ready to welcome you. The Large Philharmonic Concert Hall can hold an audience of 1,300.

April, 1923 is thought of as the official birthday of Armenian cinema, when "Goskino", the state cinema committee was set up by a decree of the Armenian Soviet of People's Commissars. The first Armenian film, "Soviet Armenia", was shot in 1924, and since then, many Armenian films have been highly acclaimed at Soviet and international film festivals.

Yerevan's television and radio services broadcast in Armenian and Russian, relaying all the republican, Soviet and international news. The city's 15 museums have valuable exhibits of the history and culture of the Armenian people, their revolutionary past.

The health service has made great headway since 1920. Diseases such as malaria, diphtheria and trachoma, once responsible for many deaths, have been completely wiped out. Today there are 40 hospitals, 6,840 doctors (there were a mere 36 before the revolution), and about 10,000 medical assistants and nurses in Yerevan alone.

The city has 200 Armenian, Russian and Azerbaijani schools, where, as in all Soviet schools, instruction is free of charge.

Every summer over 50,000 schoolchildren travel to Pioneer (an organisation for school-age children) and health camps outside the city; there are 270 play-schools and crèches attended by 45,000 children of pre-school age.

The people of Yerevan are proud of the way in which residential construction has expanded. While before the revolution Yerevan had no more than 250,000 square metres of living space, it now has ten million square metres. The amount of housing built has increased particularly over recent years. Every year there is up to 500,000 square metres more living space available, as much as

was built between 1921 and 1950. There are new residential areas such as those of Achapnyak, Nork and Ararat. The new high-rise buildings have changed Yerevan's appearance. As in the rest of the Soviet Union, housing is provided free of charge; rent accounts for no more than three per cent of the family budget.

Yerevan is among the Soviet cities with the greatest number of sports facilities. It has five stadiums, 16 swimming pools, 12 football fields and approximately 300 volleyball and basketball pitches and tennis courts. Over 200,000 of the city's residents regularly take part in some form of sporting activity. Many Armenian sportsmen have held Soviet, European and world titles and records. There are 38 sports schools for children, where expert coaches train sportsmen for the future.

On that note we conclude our brief historical survey of the city from the days of antiquity to the present time. We now invite you to discover the streets, sights and architecture of Yerevan for yourselves, and meet the courteous, hospitable and lively residents of the Armenian capital.

TOURS AROUND YEREVAN

LENIN SQUARE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Route: Lenin Square (ploshchad Lenina)—Government House—the "Singing" Fountains—Shahumyan Boulevard (bulvar Shahumyana)—The Park of Communards—Sundukyan Theatre—Ararat Wine Processing Plant—Brandy Distillery—River Razdan and ravine. Time 1-1.5 hours.

Cities, like people, are beautiful each in their own way. Some are lovely seen from a height, others unfold their delights gradually as you get to know them. Finally, there are cities whose charm is composed of subtle nuances, distinctive atmosphere, and a special sensation imparted to those present in them. Yerevan is a city of the latter type. Its geographical position, climate, vegetation, and, of course, tufa, the stone of which many of the city's buildings are built, all contribute to its appearance. You notice the cheerful pink colour of the stone as soon as you enter the Armenian capital.

Our advice is to begin your tour of Yerevan from **Lenin Square**, a convenient spot, because this is where most foreign visitors stay, in the Armenia Hotel. The Ani Hotel, where tourists from abroad also stay, is no more than ten minutes walk away along Abovyan Street (ulitsa Abovyana).

This is the centre of Yerevan, where ceremonies and meetings are held and through which processions pass on highdays and holidays. The **statue of Lenin**, the work of Sergei Merkurov (1881-1952), a prominent Soviet sculptor, rises high over the southern part of the oval square. This skilfully executed image of the leader, philosopher and revolutionary spokesman is extremely impressive. The restrained movement of the hand, the slight inclination forward, as if taking a step into the future, give the sculpture a sense of purpose and movement.

Sergei Merkurov, people's artist of the USSR, was born in the Armenian town of Alexandropol (now Leninakan). He attended art college in Germany (1902-05) and then went on to study further in Paris under Auguste Rodin in 1909.

Merkurov had met Lenin when the leader was living abroad, and listened to several of his speeches after he returned to Soviet Russia. This personal acquaintance is doubtless the reason why the statue is so convincing and acts so strongly upon the emotions.

The statue was ceremoniously unveiled on November 29, 1940, on the 20th anniversary of the establishment of Soviet power in Armenia. The pedestal of polished granite was designed by

architects Natalia Paremuzova and Levon Vartanov. The qualities of a great work of art, the synthesis of the statue with the surrounding buildings and the well-chosen site, which affords good lighting at any time of day, have made this statue famous as one of the best of Lenin.

Work to rebuild the square, which involved many talented architects, began in 1926. Alexander Tamanyan (1878-1936) is by rights considered to be the square's chief architect. He moved to Yerevan from Petrograd soon after the revolution, when he was already a famous architect and an academician. In 1924 he drew up the first general plan for rebuilding Yerevan, in which the future central square was given a special organising position. In those far-off years Tamanyan was able to see the features of the socialist city of Yerevan in the small, provincial town. Even his most ardent supporters thought some of his ideas too extreme, and many totally impracticable.

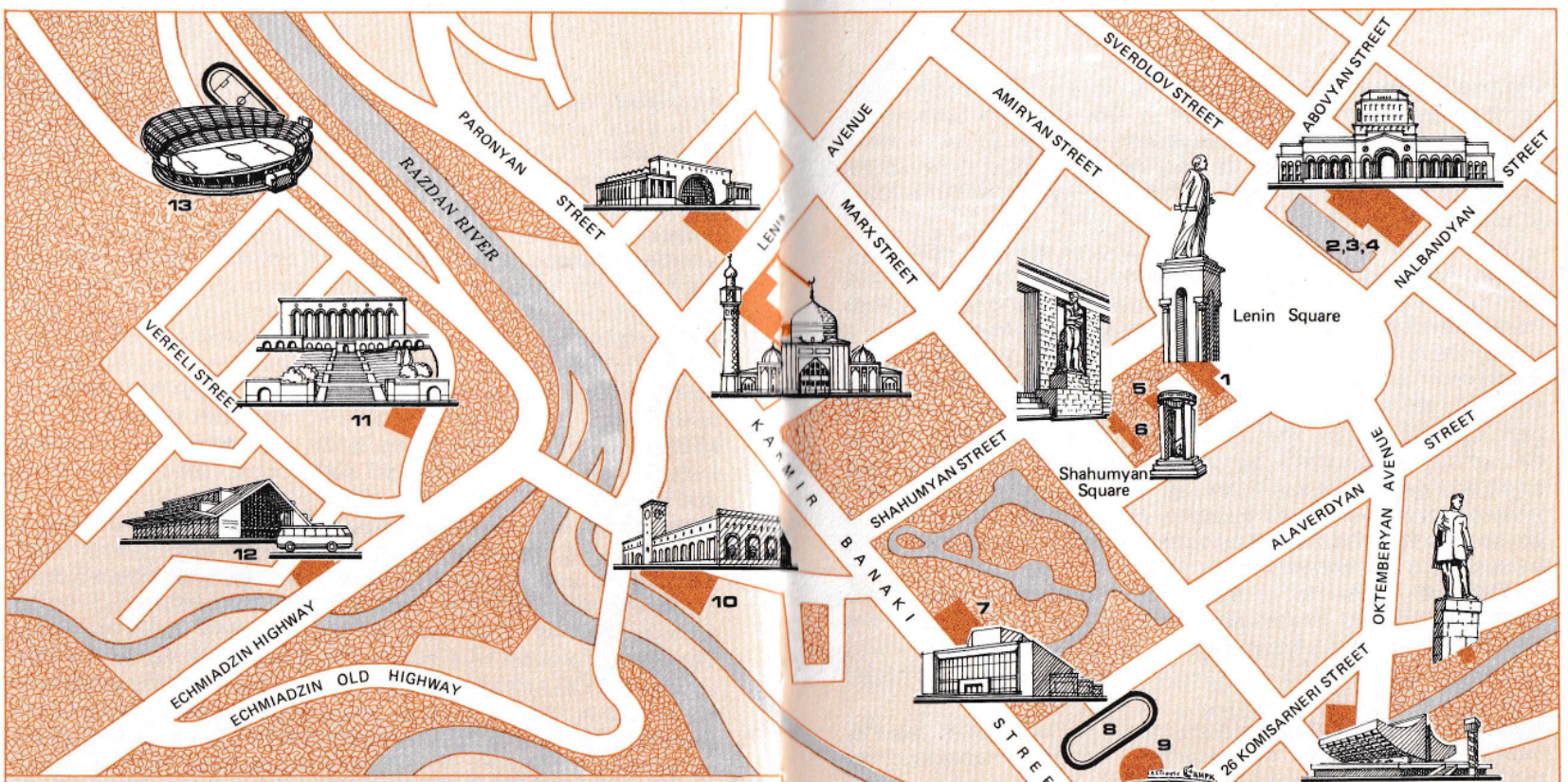
The square was nevertheless built. The leaning houses, single-storey shops, restaurants, eating houses and baths were demolished and replaced by new buildings which organically combined national style and the best innovations of world architecture. By 1929 part of the square's main building, **Government House**, was finished. This vast building, which now houses the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR, was finally completed in 1941. It forms an irregular pentagon, with one of its sides curving inwards. On this side five wide arches are supported by attractive columns. An elaborate collonade, forming open boxes, stretches the whole length of the façade above the arches.

A tall clock-tower, above which flies the Armenian flag, crimson with a blue stripe down the centre, divides the main façade.

Tamanyan studied ancient Armenian architecture at length, reworking and then using many of its features, in order to design Government House. The result is a masterpiece, a truly national work of art, which has greatly influenced subsequent Armenian town planning.

City squares are built in different ways. There are squares designed in one style by one architect. Such, for example is La Place des Voguéses in Paris, whose architect was Claude de Chastillon. Others are built over several decades, and despite the difference in style of architects of different times, have in end acquired unity and integrity, as for example St. Mark's Square in Venice and Palace Square in Leningrad.

Lenin Square (14,000 square metres) has a unified architectural style. Another administrative building, which houses several ministries, is symmetrically sited next to Government House, on its left. This lovely building, faced in cream-coloured stone, was



Lenin Square and Surrounding Area

1. Statue of Lenin
2. Museum of the Revolution
3. Armenian State Gallery
4. Armenian History Museum
5. Eternal Flame Monument
6. Statue of Stepan Shahumyan
7. Sundukyan Theatre
8. Cycling Circuit
9. Circus
10. Wine processing plant
11. Brandy distillery
12. Coach Station
13. Razdan Stadium

designed by architect Samvel Safaryan. It repeats, to use musical terminology, the *motif* and rhythm of Government House, yet at the same time possesses individuality. You can compare these buildings at length, yet while they remain similar, Government House is characterised by its elaborate forms, and the other attracts by its austerity.

Other important buildings on the square are the Main Post-Office with telegraph and long-distance telephone services, and the Council of Trade Unions building, which stand to the left of the statue of Lenin as you face it, and Armenia Hotel.

You have doubtless already noticed the intricate ornamentation on the buildings. Armenian stone masons have perfected the ancient and noble art of working with stone. The part that stone, in which Armenia is so rich, has played throughout its people's history is shown by some Armenian sayings: "Hewn stone will not lie long unused on the earth", "Good stone is precious even when it lies in mud", "As you won't sit down to eat with anyone who comes along, so you won't build a house with any stone you find".

Much of Armenia's architecture is decorated with stone designs by master craftsmen. The buildings in the square are adorned with such traditional motifs as fantastically intertwined bunches of grapes and pomegranates, sheafs of wheat and heads of birds and animals.

The **"singing" fountains** are also to be found on Lenin Square. Designed by engineer and scientist Abram Abramyan, they combine music, water and colour into a unique, unified whole. Hundreds of local people and visitors gather here in the evenings to enjoy the wonderful play of the streams of water, lit by all the colours of the rainbow.

Directly opposite the fountains stands a building which houses three of the city's major museums: the Museum of the Revolution, the Armenian History Museum and the Armenian State Gallery.

The Museum of the Revolution is one of the most important research and educational establishments in the republic. Its main aim is to show the history of the Armenian people, since the time of its guidance by the Communist Party. The current exhibition here was opened in November, 1960.

The museum has over 40,000 documents, photographs and works of art. Its first sections contain roughly 5,000 exhibits which describe the spread of Marxist ideas in Transcaucasia at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, and the founding of social-democratic societies in Armenia. Many of the stands illustrate the revolutionary work of Lenin and his Armenian disciples and comrades: Isaac Lalayants, Bogdan Knunyants, Suren Spandaryan, Stepan

Shahumyan, Kamo (Simon Ter-Petrosyan), Alexander Myasnikyan and many others.

The Armenian Bolsheviks, true to the ideas of proletarian internationalism, courageously fought tsarist autocracy and the bourgeoisie to win happiness for all the peoples of Russia. The May uprising against the bourgeois dashnak government was a major event in the history of Armenia's revolutionary movement, and the museum has much to tell us about the heroes of this rebellion. The exhibits also inform us of the decisive events of November, 1920, which culminated in the establishment of Soviet power in Armenia.

The museum devotes a great deal of space to the help which Soviet Russia gave the republic in rehabilitating its economy, completely destroyed by the dashnaks. Many exhibits testify to the solidarity and friendship of all the Soviet peoples, of their support for the Armenian people in establishing modern industry and making socialist changes. Many diagrams, plans, maps and photographs illustrate what Soviet Armenia has so far achieved, and prospects for the future.

The museum is open from 10:30 to 16:00 every day except Monday.

The Armenian History Museum, founded in 1921, has 160,000 exhibits. A visit to the museum is a fascinating journey from the Stone Age and man's first settlements to the end of the nineteenth century. There are unique relics of how people lived, beginning from the first social system, stone age tools, items made of bronze and iron, weapons from the time of the Urartu state, statuettes, jugs, coins, ornate jewellery and household utensils found during excavations. The ethnographic section houses a collection of national costumes, carpets, amulets and agricultural implements. The architecture of the Middle Age and of the urban culture of Armenia's ancient capitals Artashat, Dvin and Ani is represented in varied fashion.

Interesting exhibits tell of the age-old links between Armenia and Russia, and of Eastern Armenia's inclusion within Russia.

The museum is open from 10:30 to 16:00 every day except Monday.

The Armenian State Gallery (entrance from No. 1, Spandaryan St. (ulitsa Spandaryana) is considered one of the finest in the Soviet Union. From 1921 its collections have been continually supplemented by those from art collections of other towns and cities, pictures from exhibitions and works donated by public organisations and many individuals. There are now over 16,000 works of Armenian, Russian, West European and Eastern art.

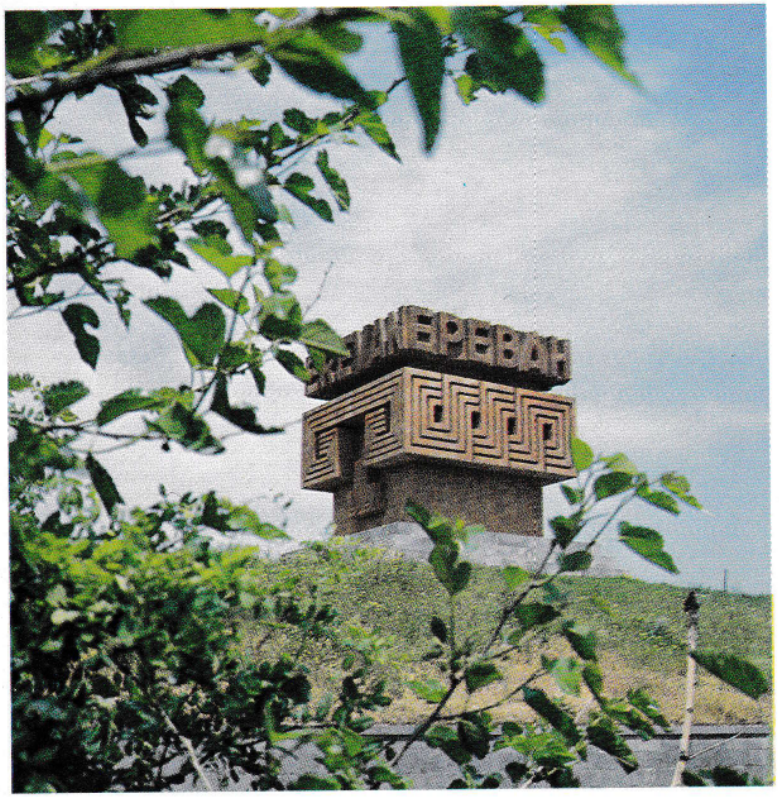
The Armenian painting section is the largest, spanning a period from the seventh century to the present day. The most ancient surviving painting are the frescoes from the temple in the village of Arug and the Lmbat Church. The frescoes from the Church of St. Grigory Prosvetitel (the teacher) in Ani, and from the Akhpat, Tatev and Akhtalin monasteries (tenth to fourteenth centuries) are of a later date. The gallery carefully preserves copies of these frescoes and also filigree illustrations to ancient Armenian manuscripts in its stocks.

Secular canvases of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries are also well-represented. Works by the five generations of talented artists from the Ovnatanyan family are worthy of particular attention.

1. Approaching Yerevan
2. The statue of Lenin in Lenin Square
3. The Armenia Hotel
4. Government House
5. The eternal flame burning in memory of those who fell fighting to establish Soviet power in Armenia
6. Statue of the revolutionary Stepan Shahumyan
7. The avenue of fountains
8. The Matenadaran, Institute of Ancient Manuscripts
9. Statue of Mesrop Mashtots, founder of the Armenian alphabet
10. Section of the Matenadaran doors
11. Bust of the poet Sayat-Nova
12. A bridge over the Razdan
13. Sculpture of a water seller

14, 15. Open-air cafés and cosy cellars with embossed work on the walls and pottery on display are conducive to a pleasant chat over a cup of coffee or a glass of wine

16. Armenia is the home of many skilled craftsmen practising the traditional folk crafts. Their work is well received when exhibited in the Soviet Union and abroad
17. New buildings are not allowed to crowd out relics of centuries past, including the unique thirteenth century Katolike Church
18. Lenin Avenue, one of the city's central highways
19. Yerevan would not be Yerevan without its fountains, swimming baths and drinking fountains sited on the streets and squares and in the gardens and parks
20. The Central Market
21. The façades of many of Yerevan's buildings are decorated with such traditional motifs as the vine, pomegranates, sheaves of wheat, birds and animals
22. The Armenian Dance Ensemble
23. The Spendiarov Theatre of Opera and Ballet
24. The Sundukyan Theatre



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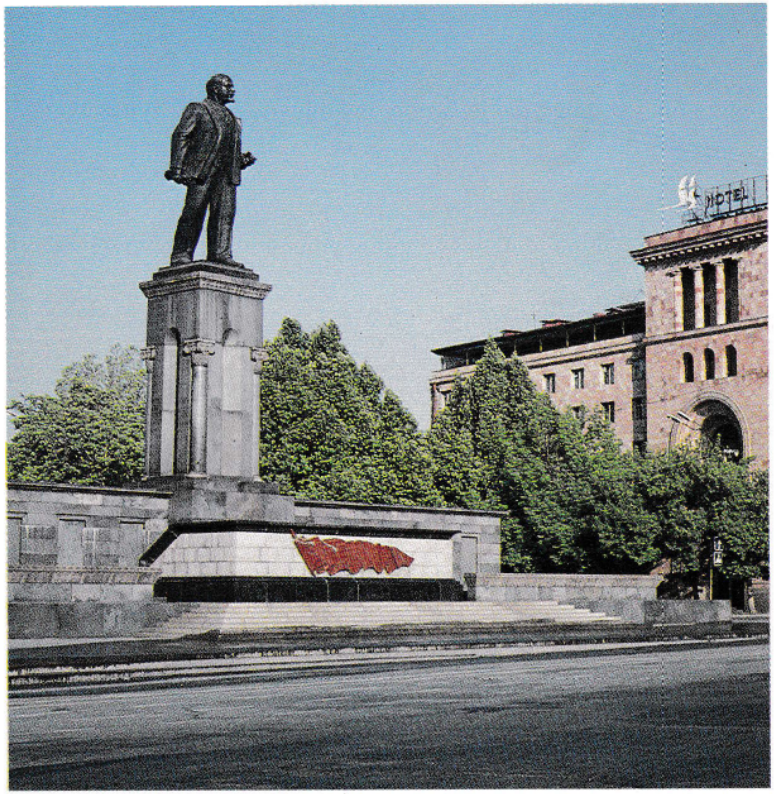

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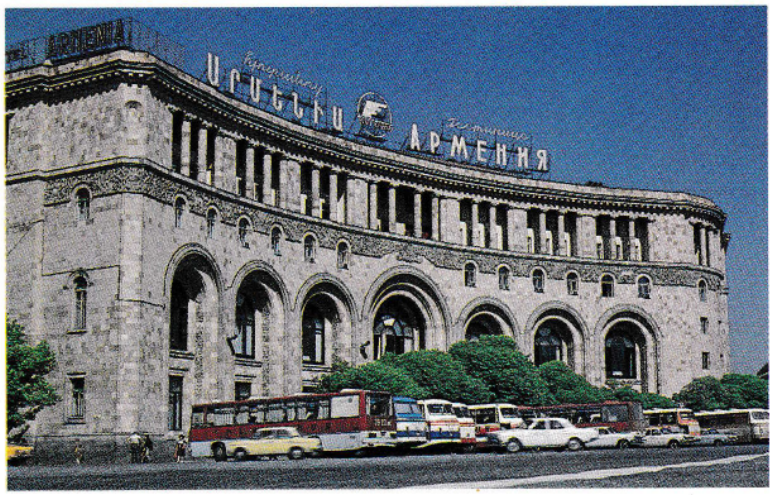

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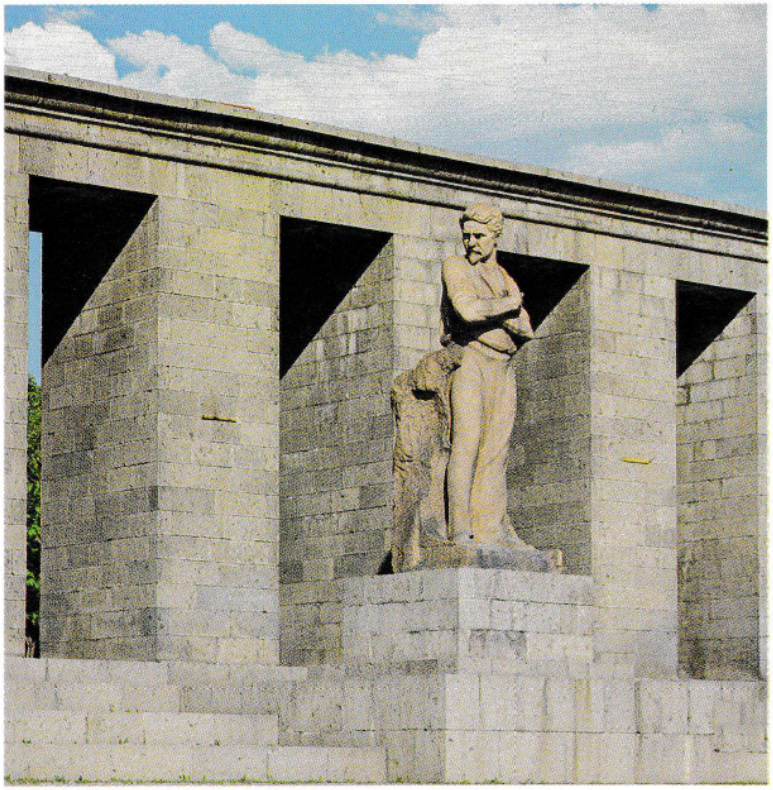

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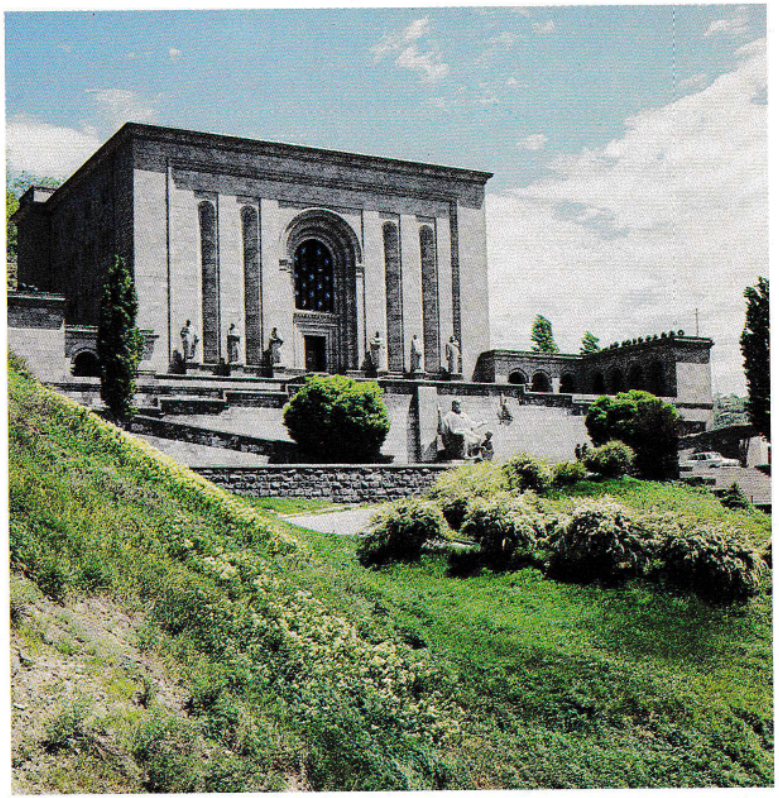

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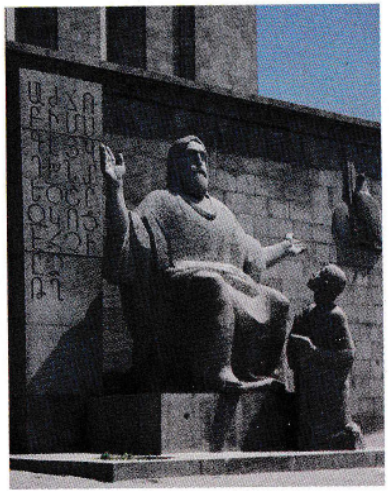

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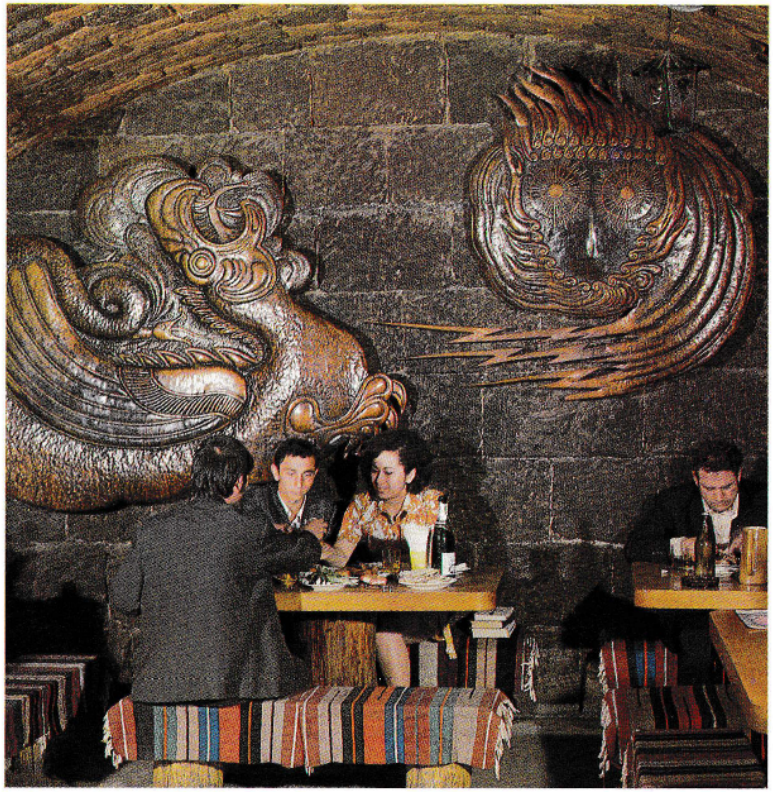

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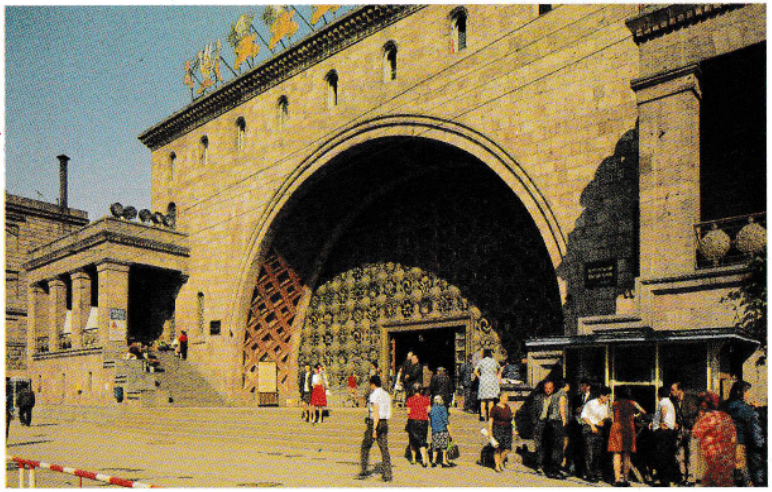

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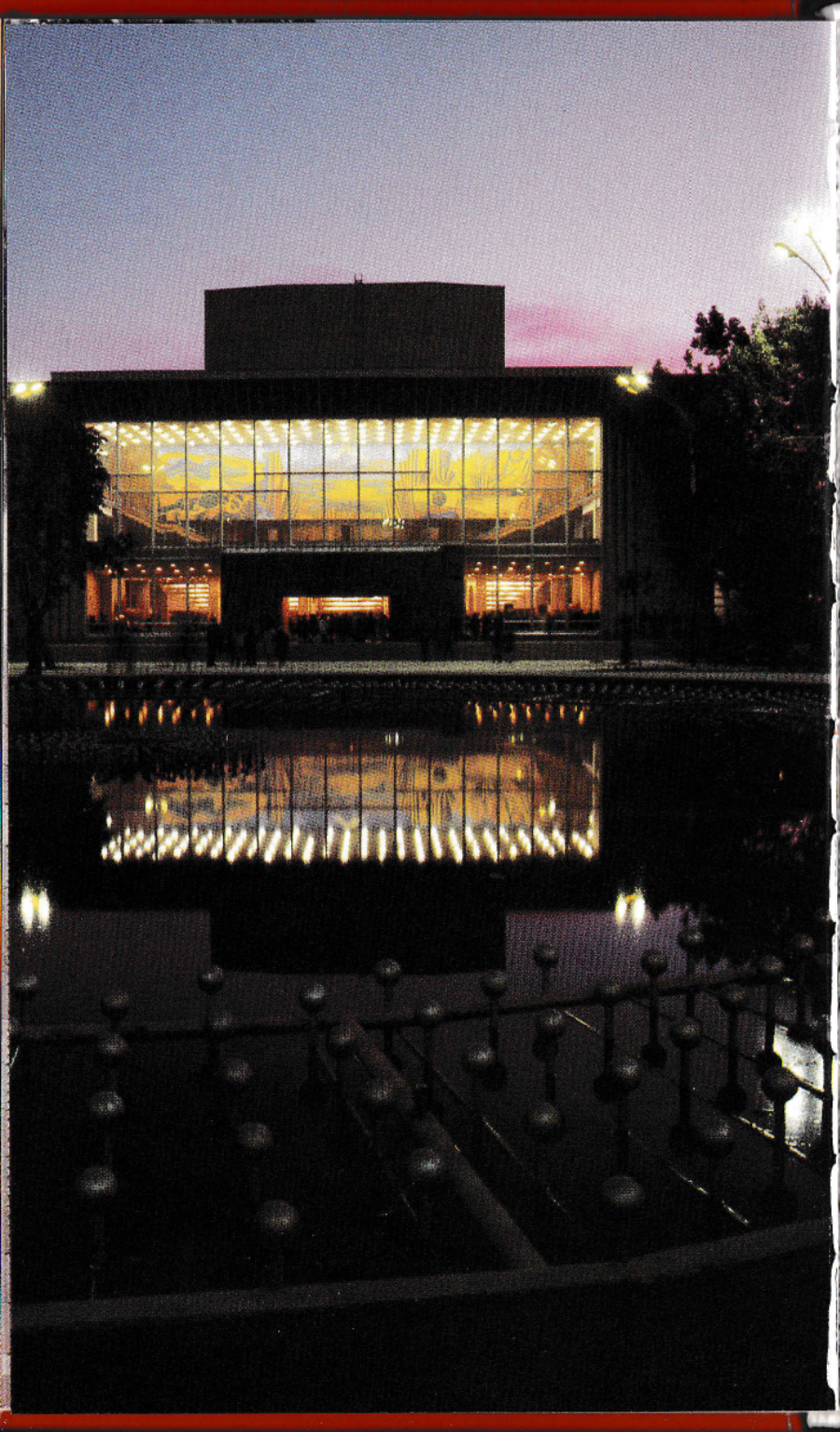


There are a considerable number of paintings by the famous sea-scape painter Ivan Aivazovsky, Armenian by origin, and also by such expert artists as Gevork Bashindzhagyan, Vardkes Surenyants, Egishe Tatevosyan, Arutyun Shishmanyan and others.

The rooms devoted to Soviet Armenian art are hung with paintings by the outstanding contemporary artist Martiros Saryan, by people's artists of Armenia Stepan Agadzhanyan, Fanos Terlemezyan, Akop Kodzhoyan, Gabriel Gyurdzhyan, Mariam Aslamazyan, Mger Abegyan, Khachatur Esayan, Ara Bekaryan, Eduard Isabekyan, Oganes Zardaryan, corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Arts Grigor Khandzhyan and Minas Avetisyan. Sculpture is represented by the works of Ara Sarkisyan, member of the USSR Academy of Arts, Suren Stepanyan, Aitsemik Urartu, Nikogaios Nikogosyan and Gukas Chubaryan. It is difficult indeed to list all the talented artists, sculptors, and engravers, artists whose works are well known to those who have visited exhibitions in Moscow and the capitals of the Union Republics and the many showings in the world's major cities.

The Russian section of the museum has an excellent collection of works by nearly all the prominent Russian and Soviet painters and sculptors. Eighteenth century paintings include those by Vladimir Borovikovsky, Alexei Venetsianov, Dmitry Levitsky, Ivan Argunov, Karl Bryullov and Vasily Tropinin. There are many canvases by outstanding nineteenth century painters, including those of the *peredvizhniki* school, such as Alexander Benua, Vasily Vereshchagin, Nikolai Ghe, Isaac Levitan, Vladimir and Konstantin Makovsky, Mikhail Vrubel, Orest Kiprensky, Konstantin Korovin, Arkhip Kuinji, Vasily Polenov, Grigory Myasoyedov, Ivan Shishkin, Ivan Kramskoi, Ilya Repin and Valentin Serov (one of his best works "Portrait of Akimova").

Russian art of the Soviet period is represented by the famous artists Pyotr Konchalovsky, Arkady Plastov, Ivan Shadr, Sergei Gerasimov, sculptor Sergei Konenkov and many others.

A pleasant surprise awaits lovers of Western art. While it is of course difficult to display at any one time all the 3,000 exhibits which the museum possesses, many of them (fourteenth to twentieth centuries) have a permanent place in the viewing halls. They include works by artists from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain, the GDR, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, the USA and other countries, ranging from works by old masters to modern art.

The gallery is open from 10:30 to 16:00 every day except Monday.

Shahumyan Boulevard, truly a realm of fountains, has its starting point at the statue of Lenin. The myriad fountains are difficult to count, and we will tell you that there are 2,750 pearly streams of water: as many as the years since Yerevan's founding when the anniversary was celebrated in 1968.

In the middle of the boulevard, which is 220 metres long, there burns an eternal flame in memory of those who fell to establish Soviet power in Yerevan (architect Eduard Sarapyan). At the other end of the boulevard you emerge onto the square where the **statue**

of Stepan Shahumyan (1878-1918), revolutionary and one of Lenin's closest comrades stands. The life of this talented leader of the masses, publicist, promoter of revolutionary ideas and founder of the first Marxist society in Armenia, was cut short in 1918, when he was shot along with other commissars by interventionists. Sculptor Sergei Merkurov has depicted Shahumyan at the moment of his shooting, with his unfailing courage, pride, persistence and contempt in the face of death for the sake of his beliefs.

The Park of the Communards (opposite Shahumyan's statue), so called in memory of the 26 communist commissars, Stepan Shahumyan among them, who were shot by interventionists, affords an opportunity to rest. At the entrance there is a modest, but very symbolic sculpture portraying a boy with a jug of water and a glass in his hand. At one time ragamuffins like this, Yerevan *gavroches*, used to wend their way around the noisy markets and streets selling water.

In the olden days water was a very precious commodity in Yerevan, especially on hot summer days. In fact, the entire stony and parched land of Armenia lacked water. How the Armenian peasant, tilling his tiny plot of land suffered, how many bloody tragedies took place for the right to water it, even if only for a short time! In many village graveyards there are tombstones, the inscriptions of which tell us that the person buried in that spot was murdered by his neighbour for the sake of water.

Modern Yerevan cannot be imagined without its fountains sparkling in the sun, without swimming pools affording cool relief, elaborate drinking fountains in the streets, squares and parks. Here you may quench your thirst with searingly cold water.

The park's main path leads to one of Yerevan's finest buildings, the **Sundukyan State Academic Theatre.**

Although Armenian theatre has been in existence for two thousand years, a truly national theatre was only established after the victory of Soviet power. The first performance, on January 25, 1922, was of the popular comedy "Pepo", written by Gabriel Sundukyan (1825-1912), the founder of Armenian realist drama.

The theatre's varied repertoire includes plays by Shakespeare, Molière, Schiller, Ibsen, Alexander Ostrovsky, Anton Chekhov, Maxim Gorky, Armenian classic and contemporary authors.

The theatre's present building, catering for an audience of 1,140, was designed by architect Rafael Alaverdyan and built in 1966. In the spacious foyer there is a panel by Martiros Saryan. The foyer is adjoined by a glass-covered winter garden with a pool.

Now that you have rested in the cool park with its canals and intricate little bridges, our route now takes us along Karmir banaki Street (ulitsa Karmir banaki). A little further away, flowing parallel to it is the rushing Razdan, crossed by the three-span Akhtanak (Victory) Bridge, built in 1945 and named in honour of the defeat of the nazi invaders. It is 200 metres long, 25 metres wide and 34 metres high. It was designed by engineer Simon Ovnanyan and architects Artashes Mamadzhanyan and Ashot Asatryan. The bridge links the city with the Echmiadzin Highway, the coach station and airport.

Next to the bridge, on the left bank of the river, stands a huge basalt building with a tall tower, reminiscent of a fortress or castle. This is the **Ararat wine processing plant**, designed by architect Rafael Israelyan, and which stands on the site of the former sardar palace. In 1827, in one of the palace's rooms, Alexander Griboyedov attended the first performance, by officers in the Russian army, of his immortal comedy "Woe from Wit".

Alexander Griboyedov (there is a statue to him in Yerevan), diplomat, writer and statesman, who took part in the taking of the Yerevan fortress in 1827, devoted much of his energy to liberating Eastern Armenia from the foreign yoke and incorporating it within Russia. His name has become an eternal symbol of the indestructible friendship between the Russian and Armenian peoples.

The sardar palace and its forbidding fortress walls were destroyed long ago. Now tart wines mature peacefully in the cellars of the wine processing plant, at the entrance to which guests are greeted by the words of Maxim Gorky: "Long live the people who understand the art of making wine and who through it transfer the strength of the sun to the spirit."

These cellars are truly inexhaustible. Every year four million decalitres of wine leave the factory. Armenian wine-growers are justifiably proud of their produce, which has won world-wide recognition at international competitions. According to poets, Armenian wine, sparkling with the sun's clear light or flowing in thick ruby-red streams, raises the spirit and gives people the strength of the mountain eagle (provided, of course, it is drunk in moderation).

The **brandy distillery** stands on a high plateau at the other end of the bridge, as if competing with the wine factory in architectural design and the quality of its produce. Architect Ovanes Markaryan used all the geographical features to advantage, and the building, with its nine austere arches, and long flight of steps leading to it, puts a striking finish to the view of the Akhtanak Bridge.

The descent from the bridge will lead you onto a narrow, winding road, which curves along both banks of the Razdan. The wooded cliffs, fantastic canyons, passages and bridges, the many jetties from which you can swim or fish on a fine day, make the ravine one of the places in which the people of Yerevan love to relax.

The **Abovyan Children's Park**, which is joined to the town centre by a tunnel half a kilometre long, lies on the left bank of the river. There is a fun fair and a miniature railway built in 1938. On the opposite bank stands the **Razdan stadium**, republic's largest, with a capacity of 75,000.

This is a suitable spot in which to end our first tour of the city: you can relax in the park with the children, but be careful not to wear yourselves out, for there are many more interesting tours ahead.

LENIN AVENUE

Route: Gei Mosque—Central Market—Museum of Modern Art—Spendiarov Theatre of Opera and Ballet—Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (the Matenadaran). Time: 1-1.5 hours.

Lenin Avenue (prospekt Lenina) is one of Yerevan's main highways, and it can be reached from Lenin Square along Amiryan Street (ulitsa Amiryana), from Shahumyan Square (ploshchad Shahumyana) along Marx Street (ulitsa Marksa). Karmir banaka Street, which we have already visited on our first tour, crosses the avenue at its bottom end. This is where we are going to start our second walk around Yerevan.

The gleaming coloured tiles of the ancient mosque have doubtless already caught your eye: this is **Gei Mosque**, an interesting example of eighteenth century Persian architecture. It is now the History of Yerevan Museum, covering both the prerevolutionary and Soviet periods. The museum has many exhibits which tell us about the ancient inhabitants of the Ararat Valley, and other interesting items include a statuette of Teishebia, Urartu god of war, a mould with cuneiform inscription describing the building of the fortress of Erebuni, a map of ancient Armenia compiled in 751, and banners captured in battle, weapons and the large keys to the Yerevan fortress, all relics of the Russo-Persian War of 1826-1828.

The sections dealing with the Soviet period cover Yerevan's socialist development, its industry and seats of learning and culture. The museum is open from 10:00 to 18:00 every day except Monday.

As you walk up the avenue you will see on the left the arched building of the Central Market (architect Grigory Agababyan, engineer Amazasp Arakelyan). All Yerevan's markets are convenient and have excellent facilities, unlike the old Eastern bazars.

The **Central Market** is an original building, somewhat reminiscent of a huge gymnasium. The open-work reinforced concrete constructions give the building of 2,300 square metres a lightness and airiness.

Lenin Avenue is lined mostly with residential buildings, although, of course, not all of them are of equal architectural merit, as they were built over more than one decade.

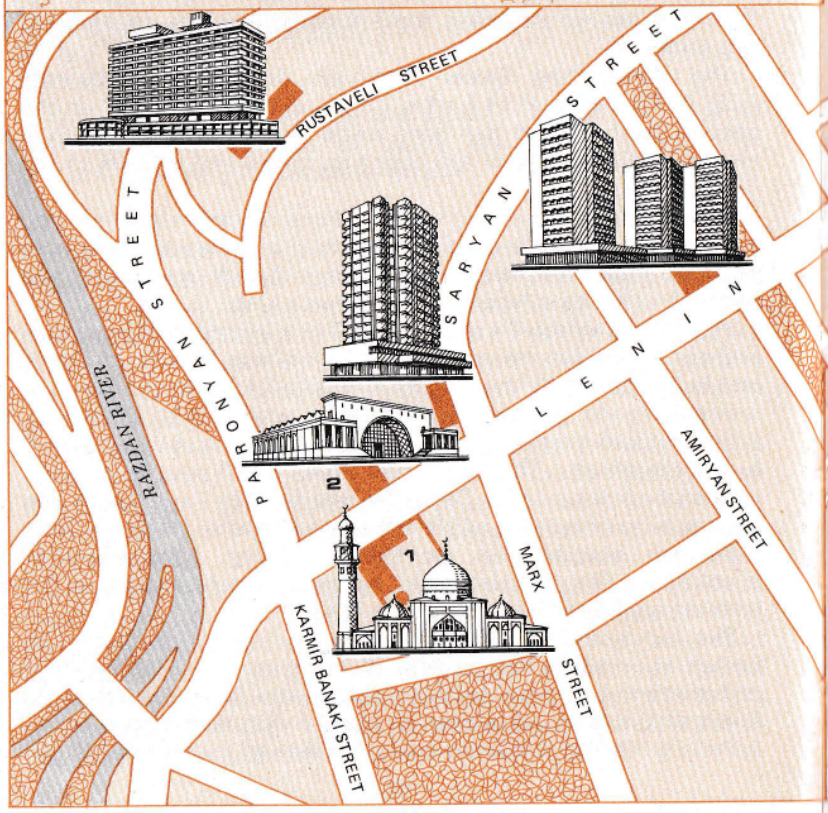
The **Museum of Modern Art** occupies the ground floor of No. 7. Frequent exhibitions of works by Soviet and foreign artists are held here, always attracting many lovers of painting, drawing and sculpture.

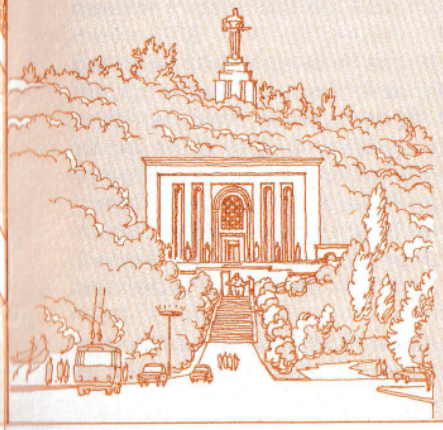
The outstanding Soviet Armenian poet Egishe Charents (1897-1937) lived a little further up the avenue, in No. 17 on the second floor. His flat has been made into a museum, which is visited by thousands of the poet's admirers and visitors to the city.

Nearby is the cosy "Kaj Nazar" (Brave Nazar) café where you can enjoy a cool drink or an ice-cream. It is named after the hero of a well-known folk tale, Nazar, a rather stupid, lazy coward and braggart, who, by a twist of fate, became king.

Further on, where **Tumanyan Street** (ulitsa Tumanyana) crosses Lenin Avenue, stands the **Spendiarov Theatre of Opera and Ballet**, one of Yerevan's best examples of Soviet architecture. It was designed by Alexander Tamanyan, who, in original fashion, combined two auditoria in one building by constructing one roof over both stages. The opera hall holds 1,260 people, and the concert hall holds 1,400. The latter was built by Tamanyan's son Georgy, who completed all his father's works after his death. Both halls are shaped like amphitheatres and have excellent accoustics. The architect was awarded a gold medal at the International Exhibition in Paris in 1936.

The repertoire of the opera company, which gave its first performance at the end of 1932, includes works by both classic and modern Armenian, Russian, Soviet and foreign composers. Some of the best are Armenian operas with historical themes, including the first Armenian opera "Arshak II", written in 1868 by





Lenin Avenue

1. Gei Mosque (History of Yerevan Museum)
2. Central Market
3. Spendiarov Theatre of Opera and Ballet
4. Statue of Ovanes Tumanyan
5. Statue of Alexander Spendiarov
6. Bust of Sayat-Nova
7. Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (the Matenadaran)

Tigran Chukhadzhyan. It is set in the fourth century, when Armenia, divided between Byzantium and Persia, fought persistently for her independence. Another opera, "David-bek" by Armen Tigranyan, describes the Armenian people's liberation struggle against foreign invaders at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and their age-old friendship with the Russian and Georgian peoples.

Statues to two prominent representatives of Armenian culture stand in the spacious square in front of the theatre: to the left is the writer and public figure **Ovanes Tumanyan** (1869-1923), sculpted by Ara Sarkisyan, and to the right, composer **Alexander Spendiarov** (1871-1928), the sculptors of which were Ara Sarkisyan and Gukas Chubaryan. Nearby, overhung by shady trees, lies Spendiarov's grave.

Music and poetry go hand in hand, and this is very clearly expressed in the work of Sayat-Nova, the *ashug* (folk-singer, story-teller) of genius who lived in the eighteenth century and wrote in Armenian, Georgian and Azerbaijani. In 1963, the World Council For Peace passed a decision to celebrate his 250th anniversary. It was then that the sculpture of white marble square slabs with **Sayat-Nova's bust**, the work of Ara Arutyunyan, was unveiled.

The eyes of this man who sang of friendship between peoples, love and flowers are turned towards three bas-relief female figures, an Armenian, Georgian and Azerbaijani. A clear stream of water flows from a small chute.

The street which runs off Lenin Avenue a little below the square where the statue stands is named after Sayat-Nova. Its lawns are covered with roses, the poet's favourite flower.

Beyond the square, to the right of the avenue, stands the **Komitas Conservatoire**, founded in 1923. The composers, conductors, musicians, singers, choirmasters and musical theorists who have graduated from here are the pride of modern Armenian music.

If you cross **Moskovyan Street** (ulitsa Moskovyan), immediately after the statue of Sayat-Nova, you will come upon an attractive residential building, built in the 'thirties for Yerevan's artistes. The many memorial plaques on its façade remind us of the names which made their mark upon the Armenian arts world. Here you can rest a little in the "Skvoznyachok Café", whose tables stand on the pavement, and which fully lives up to its name, which means "little breeze". It can offer you coffee, made as Eastern coffee should be, on burning hot sand, fruit drinks and juices, and cooling ice-cream.

The huge monument to the Motherland of Armenia can be seen from any spot on the avenue, but you will learn more about that

later on. You are now approaching the point where the avenue runs into the cliff-face, of which the **Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (the Matenadaran),** built in 1957, designed by Mark Grigoryan, forms an organic part. Hardly a single visitor leaves Yerevan without visiting the institute; it is one of the most interesting things to see in the republic.

A flight of steps leads up to a statue of Mesrop Mashtots, who compiled the Armenian alphabet (in 396). The scholar is seated with one arm raised aloft, pointing the way to literacy and knowledge to his first pupil, bending his knee reverentially before his teacher. The letters of the Armenian alphabet have been carved into the wall behind.

Before the entrance to the museum, stand sculptures of ancient philsophers, scientists and men of the arts who, from left to right are: Toros Roslin (thirteenth century), Grigor Tatevtsi (fifteenth century), Anani Shirakatsi (seventh century), Movses Khorenatsi (fifth century), Mkhitar Gosh (twelfth century) and Frik (fourteenth century).

As you enter this temple of reason through massive doors of embossed copper, you see before you the entrance hall decorated with a mosaic of the Avarair Battle, one of the memorable events in the life of the Armenian people, when they rose, on May 26, 451, against their conquerors. On the wall opposite the staircase there is a fresco, a triptych depicting three different periods in the history and culture of the Armenian people, by Ovanes Khachatryan.

The Matenadaran, which in ancient Armenian means "manuscript store" or "library", is a major centre for the study and preservation of Armenian works of literature. In ancient times and the Middle Ages manuscripts were reverentially guarded in Armenia, and they played an important role in the people's fight against spiritual subjugation and assimilation. The major monasteries and universities had special writing rooms, where skilled scribes copied books by Armenian scholars and writers, and Armenian translations of works by foreign authors.

The scribes' lot was not an easy one: for tens of years they would sit in tiny, dark rooms, hunched over manuscripts. It is difficult to say how many of them lost their sight, and how many of them found an early grave because of their job; how much indeed they suffered, these humble people, saving books from fire and pillage, how many of them were killed there in their cells as they sat working. Many manuscripts, like wounded soldiers, bear the marks of sword, blood and fire. The enemy buried them, drowned them and even went so far as to chain them up.

Those selfless scribes, thanks to whom many of the treasures now in the Matenadaran have come down to us, thought not of themselves; they were concerned only for their manuscripts. Here is a touching inscription, appended to the end of a book by a book-lover of olden days:

> Reader mine, I beg of thee
> Drink in my words:
> Take my book unto thyself, keep it and read it.
> If it be captured, retrieve it,
> Place it not in damp places, for it will moulder,
> Nor let the wax of your candle drip upon it,
> Neither moisten your finger to turn the pages,
> Nor in shameful fashion tear out its pages.

Tens of thousands of Armenian manuscripts perished in the innumerable invasions, wars and plundering raids. Approximately 25,000 have survived, including over 10,000 folios and also 2,500 fragments collected in the Matenadaran. The rest of them are the property of various museums and libraries throughout the world, chiefly in Venice, Jerusalem, Vienna, Beirut, Paris and London.

The Matenadaran's "holy of holies" are the armoured cellars, equipped to protect the manuscripts from dust and damage.

The most ancient parchment book in the stocks is the Gospel of Lazarus, written in 887. There are other earlier manuscripts which have come down to us in fragments from the fifth to eighth centuries. The most ancient paper manuscript dates from 981.

Visitors to the Matenadaran, and there are more than 50,000 annually, can see the best examples of manuscript books and the wonderful illustrations to them in the exhibition hall on the first floor. There are works on history, philosophy, mathematics, medicine, astronomy and geography. On a separate stand is the largest Armenian manuscript in the world, weighing 34 kilograms. 700 calf skins were used in its compilation. Next to this giant is a tiny book measuring 3 × 4 centimetres and weighing a mere 19 grams. Other interesting exhibits include the Gospels of 1053, 1193 and 1411 with the unfading colours of their masterful miniatures, translations from Aristotle, a unique ancient Assyrian manuscript and an ancient Indian manuscript on palm leaves in the shape of a fan.

The Matenadaran's manuscript collection is of prime importance for the study of the history and culture of Armenia, and also all Transcaucasia, Asia Minor and many Middle Eastern countries. Works by some philosophers of antiquity survived only

in their Armenian translation. These include Eusebius of Caesaria's "Chronicle", the ancient Greek philosopher Xenon's treatise "On Nature" and many others.

The archives here are also rich, preserving over 100,000 documents of the fourteenth to nineteenth centuries: various deeds, decrees, treaties and letters, which contain vast material on the political and socio-economic history of Armenia and neighbouring countries.

Other relics in the exhibition include the first Armenian printed book "Parzatumar" (Explanatory Calendar), published in 1512 in Venice and the first Armenian magazine "Azdarar" (the messenger) first published in 1794 in the Indian city of Madras. Next to them are the Decree on the founding of Novo-Nakhichevan (a settlement near Rostov-on-Don, now included within the city boundaries), signed by the Russian Empress Catherine II, and Napoleon Bonaparte's signature. In 1978 the writer Marietta Shaginyan presented the Matenadaran with a previously unknown document bearing the signature of Goethe.

The Matenadaran is constantly acquiring manuscripts found in other countries. Several hundred books dating from the thirteenth to eighteenth centuries have recently been sent by Armenians living in Libya, Syria, France, Bulgaria, Romania, India and the USA.

These precious items do not lie unused in the Matenadaran: by carefully studying the manuscripts, many of which are restored in a special laboratory, scholars in various fields can shed more light on many aspects of the history and culture of Armenia, the Caucasus as a whole as well as the Middle East. Experts in Armenia and Eastern studies come from all over the world, and all facilities are provided for their research.

Yet one more manuscript is carefully preserved here. Unlike all the others, however, its pages have been filled in our time. This is the visitor's book, which contains comments by prominent scientists, major political and public figures, writers, artists and actors. This is the remark left in the book by Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, when he visited the Matenadaran on November 28, 1970:

"It is with profound admiration that I note the care with which Socialist Armenia preserves the magnificent relics of its people's ancient culture for present and future generations."

ABOVYAN STREET

Route: Armenian Society of Friendship and Cultural Links with Foreign Countries—Armenian Artists' Centre—Children's Picture Gallery—The Hands Statue—the Chamber Music Hall—Yerevan University—Armenian Craft Museum—Youth Centre—Akhtanak Park—monument to the Motherland of Armenia. Time: 1-1.5 hours.

The people of Yerevan are attached to Abovyan Street, perhaps because it was once the city's main thoroughfare (then called Astafievskaya Street), or perhaps because, despite modern trends, it has retained many features of the dear old days, and is not spoiled by somewhat monotonous high-rise buildings.

Abovyan Street begins from Lenin Square, and you have probably already noticed one of the buildings near the start, No. 2, the front of which is covered with notices of forthcomig concerts. This is the **Small Philharmonic Concert Hall**, where piano and violin recitals and literary readings are usually given.

The single- and two-storey houses with their balconies lining the first part of the street give it a certain homeliness. One of those houses, No. 10, bears a memorial plaque with the words: "The great Russian writer Maxim Gorky stayed in this house in 1928." Today it is the **Karapetyan Geological Museum.**

The museum houses a display of various building materials: tufas, pumice-stones, slags, basalts, granites and marbles of the most varied shades, and the metals and minerals in which the republic abounds. There are also fossilised fauna and flora from ancient times. The largest single exhibit is the unusually big restored skeleton of a primordial elephant. The museum is open from 10:00 to 17:00 every day except Sunday and Monday.

On the opposite side of the street, at No. 3, the old barocco mansion with an attractive façade of black stone is the headquarters of the Armenian Society of Friendship and Cultural Links with Foreign Countries. From the time of its founding in 1948, the society has done much to acquaint the public abroad with the achievements of Soviet Armenia; it organises exhibitions, tours by dramatic, opera and ballet companies, and holds days devoted to literature and art. At the present time the society is in contact with over 250 state, public, scientific and cultural organisations in over 70 countries. The society publishes

a monthly bulletin called "Armenia Today" in Russian, English, French and German.

There are, of course, relatively new buildings on this old section of the street: the **Detsky Mir department store** for children (No. 1), built in 1935, the **Yerevan Hotel** (No. 14), the **Armenian Artists' Centre** (No. 16), where major exhibitions of Armenian painting, sculpture, drawing and posters are held, and the **Moskva Cinema** (No. 18), with two winter halls and one spacious summer hall.

On the other side of the street from the cinema is the **Stanislavsky Russian Theatre** (No. 7), whose company, formed in 1937, puts on the best Russian classic and contemporary works for Armenian audiences. Plays written by Armenian authors are also performed here in Russian.

The theatre was designed by Karo Alabyan, a talented Soviet architect, although he didn't escape the influence of constructivism, popular in the 'thirties. In 1974 the building was reconstructed and refaced in light tufa. Alabyan designed many public and residential buildings, which are highly thought of by architectural experts. He was responsible for such buildings as the Soviet Army Theatre and surface building of the Krasnopresnenskaya Metro station in Moscow, the Sea Port building in Sochi and for the general reconstruction plan for the hero-city of Volgograd. Both Yerevan and Moscow have streets named after Alabyan.

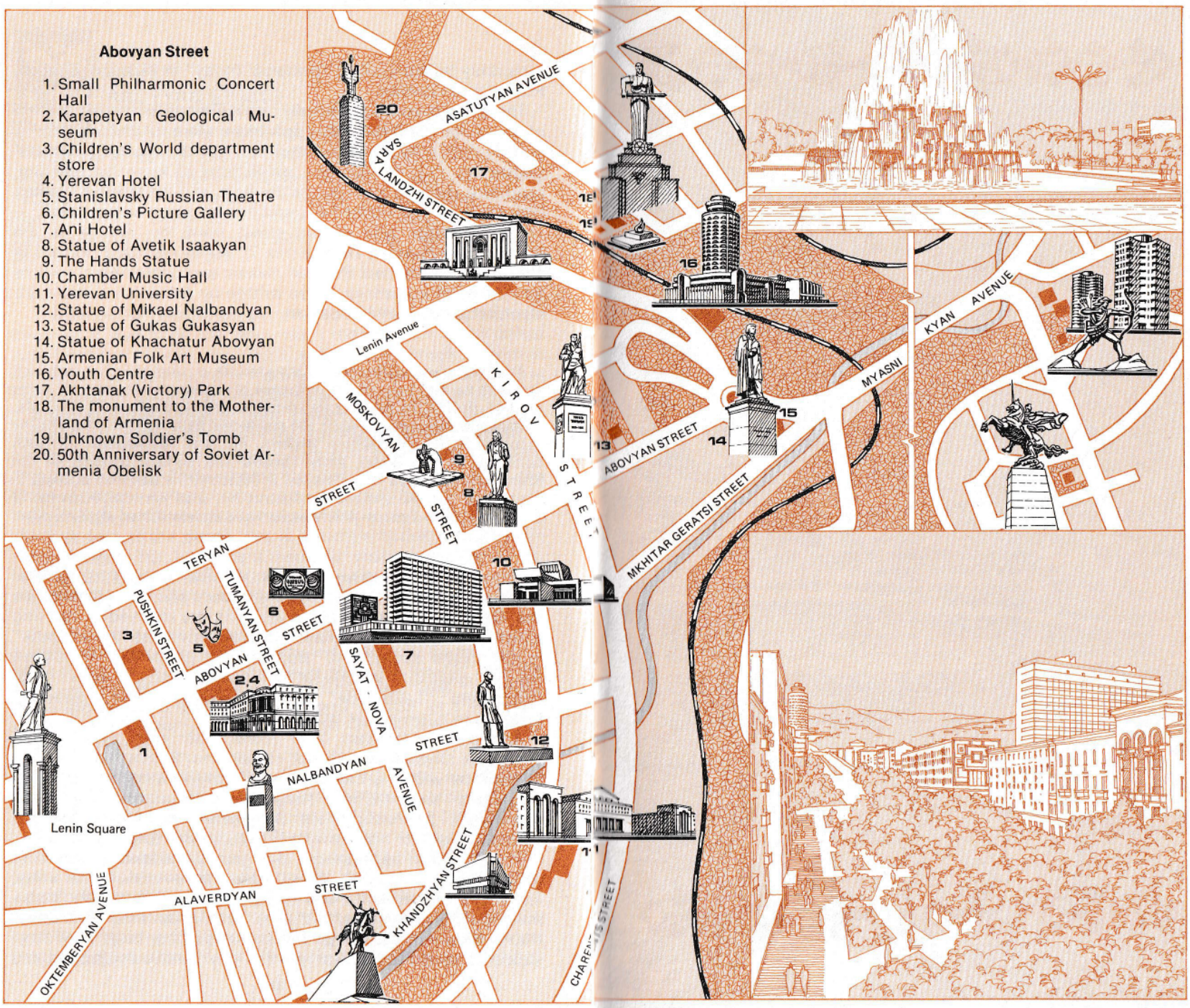
Next to the Russian Theatre, in the same architectural complex, is the republic's **Physical Culture and Sport Committee** (No. 9). Over 600,000 people in Armenia are involved in sporting activities. The republic's main sports societies are "Ashkhatank" (trade unions sportsmen), "Burevestnik" (students), "Trudoviye reservy" (pupils at vocational technical schools), "Sevan" (rural sportsmen) "Lokomotiv" (railway workers) and "Spartak" (workers in co-operative organisations).

Armenian sportsmen have more than once been world, European, Olympic and Soviet champions. Sports fans are well acquainted with the names of world title-holders and Olympic medallists weight-lifters Sergo Ambartsumyan and Yurik Vardanyan, gymnasts Grant Shaginyan and Albert Azaryan, pentathlonist Igor Novikov and boxer Vladimir Engibaryan.

The street's appearance changes considerably after its junction with Tumanyan Street. Here the pavements are wider, lined with flower beds and shady shrub borders, tiny swimming pools, and paths laid with flagstones wind like forest tracks. You feel as though the pathways of a large park have suddenly been transported into the city centre. Sculptures and

Abovyan Street

1. Small Philharmonic Concert Hall
2. Karapetyan Geological Museum
3. Children's World department store
4. Yerevan Hotel
5. Stanislavsky Russian Theatre
6. Children's Picture Gallery
7. Ani Hotel
8. Statue of Avetik Isaakyan
9. The Hands Statue
10. Chamber Music Hall
11. Yerevan University
12. Statue of Mikael Nalbandyan
13. Statue of Gukas Gukasyan
14. Statue of Khachatur Abovyan
15. Armenian Folk Art Museum
16. Youth Centre
17. Akhtanak (Victory) Park
18. The monument to the Motherland of Armenia
19. Unknown Soldier's Tomb
20. 50th Anniversary of Soviet Armenia Obelisk



1. The Ani Hotel
2. Statue of Gukas Gukasyan, founder of the Armenian Young Communist League
3,4,5. Flowerbeds, shrubs and paved paths adorn many of Yerevan's streets. The emerald green of the lawns is enhanced by sculptures and ornamental pitchers produced by the city's artists
6. The Hands Statue
7. The city expands upwards as well as outwards: its streets and avenues are lined with multi-storey buildings which have been designed to suit the climate and blend with the scenery
8. Statue of the architect Alexander Tamanyan
9. The Chess Club
10. The Chamber Music Hall
11. Yerevan University
12. Seen from the surrounding hills Yerevan appears as a city of light tall buildings interspersed with greenery
13. Statue of the poet Avetik Isaakyan
14. Statue of the writer Mikael Nalbandyan
15. The Youth Centre
16. One of Yerevan's cafés
17. One of the city's streets
18. The monument to the Motherland of Armenia
19. Memorial to the victims of the 1915 genocide
20. The Erebuni Fortress Museum
21,22,23. Yerevan is closely linked with the life and work of Martiros Saryan. Here his canvases are preserved and exhibited
24. The monument "In Defence of Peace"

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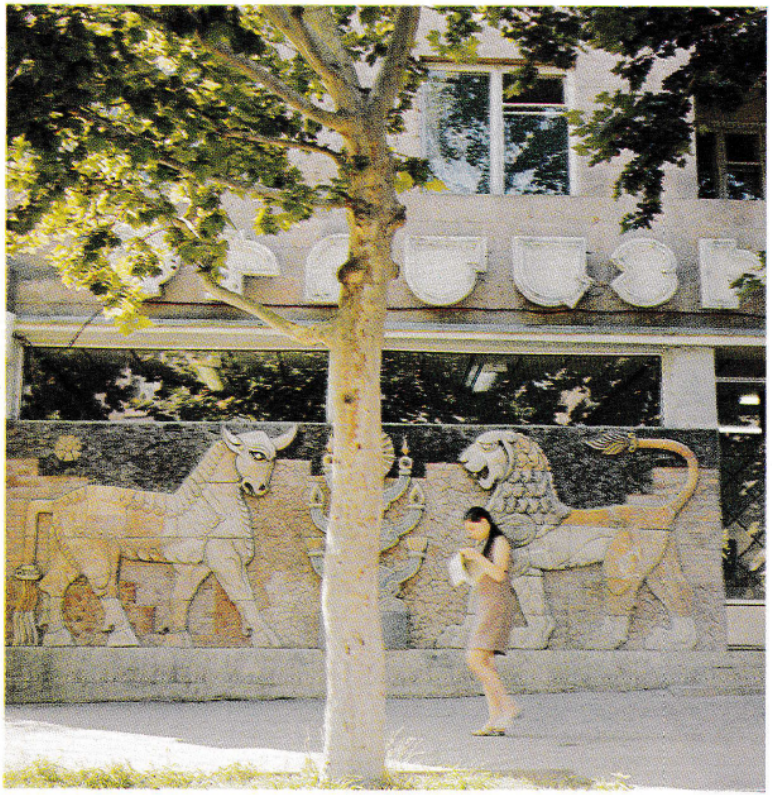

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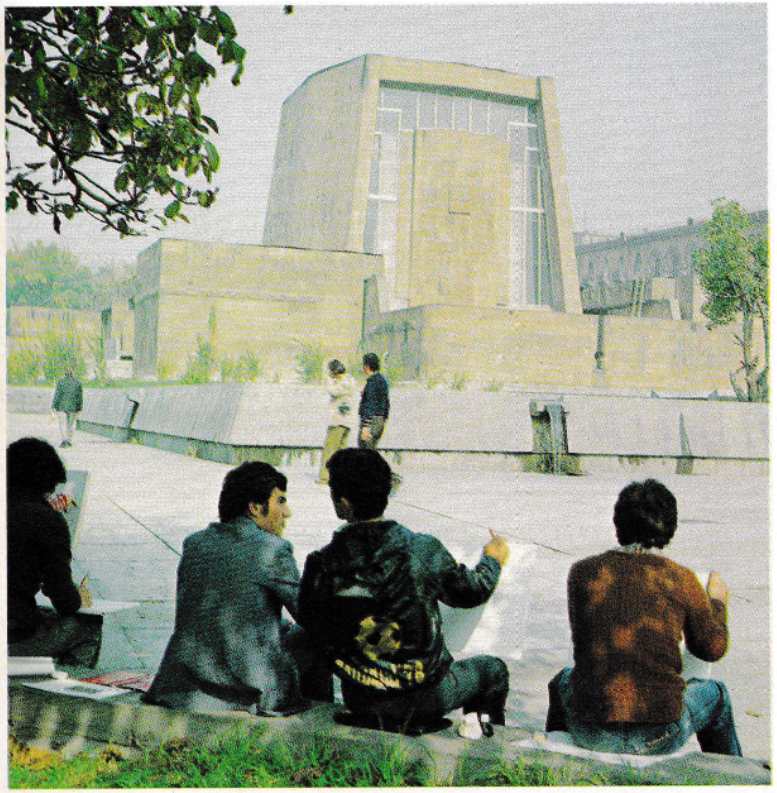

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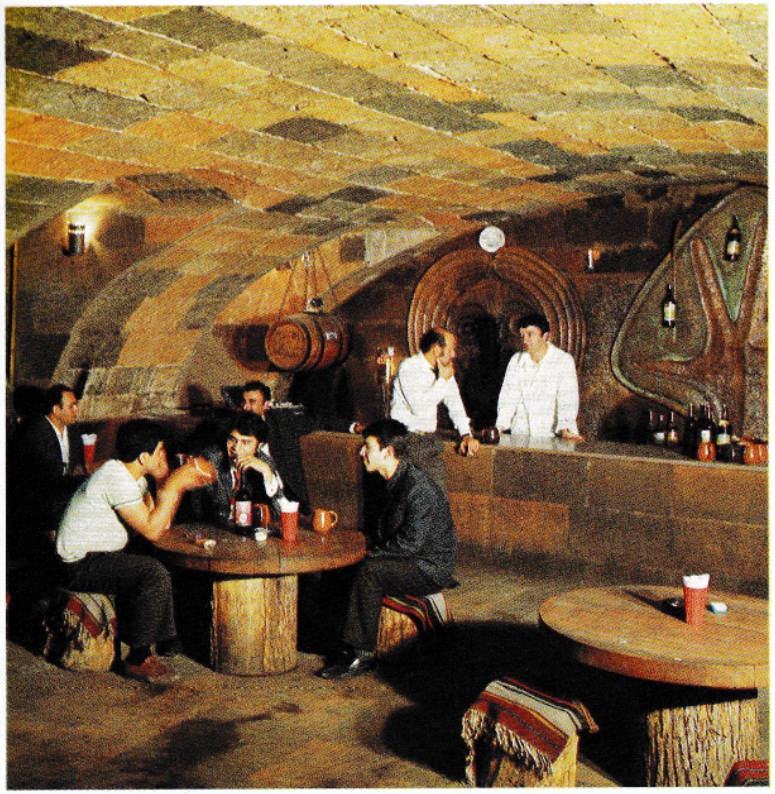

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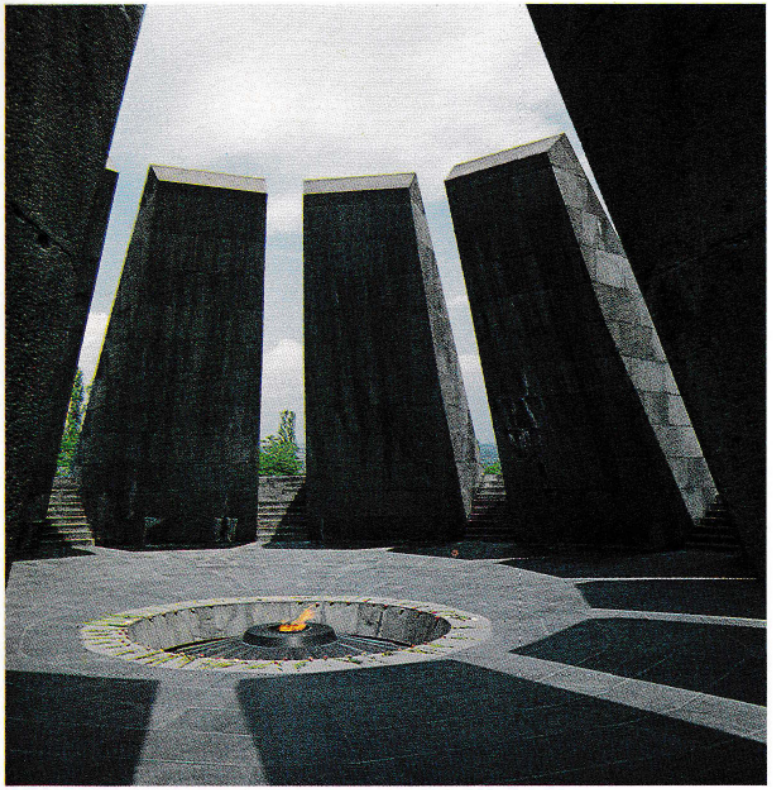

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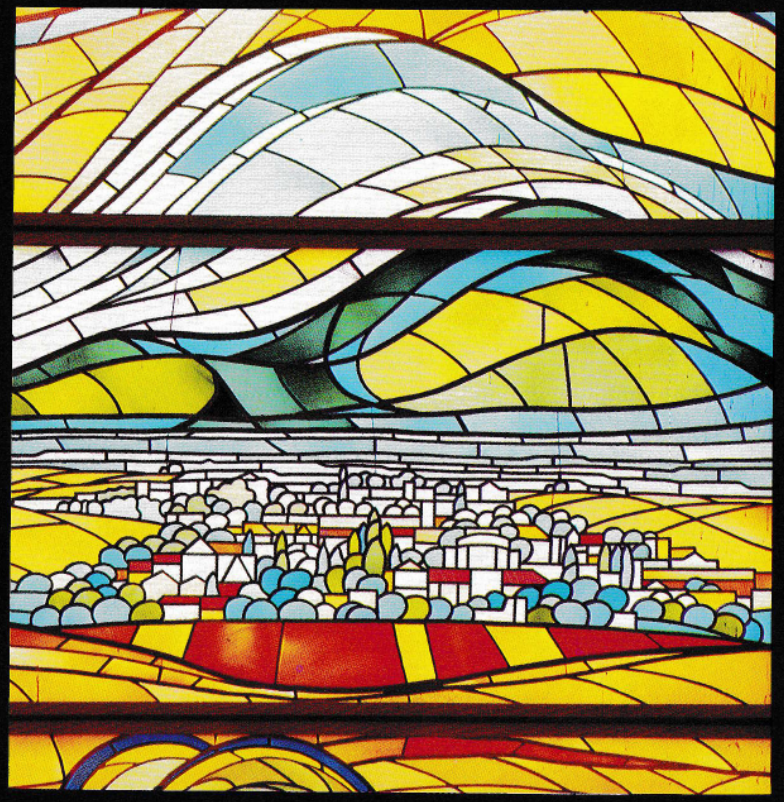

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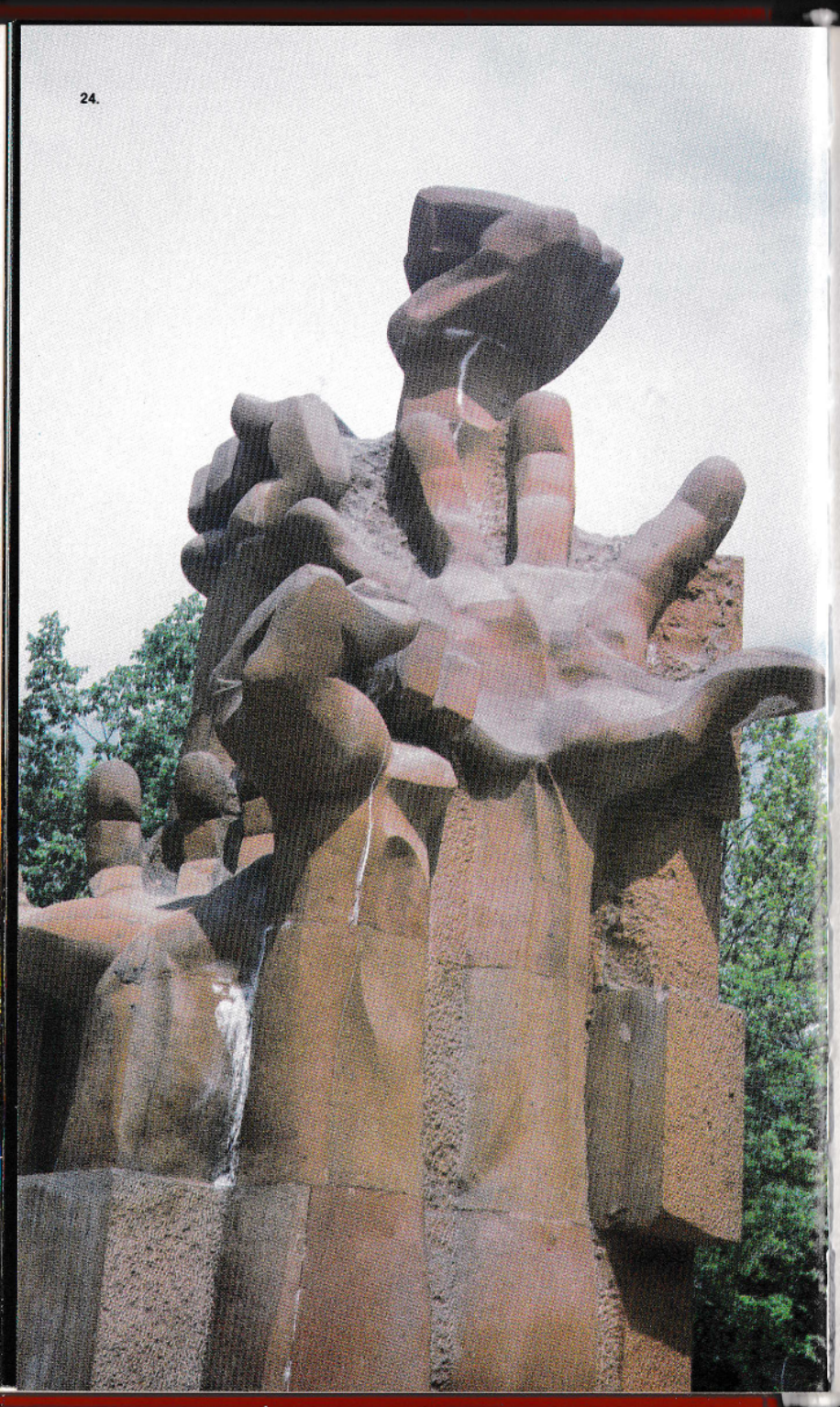


24.

decorative jugs, works of the city's artists, which they have put on public display, form a harmonious whole with the emerald green lawns.

Armenia has long been famed for its artists, sculptors and stone-carvers, and children are brought up to love art. For this reason the world's first **Children's Picture Gallery** (No. 13 on the corner of Abovyan and Sayat-Nova streets) is of interest. Over the years the gallery has developed into a true centre for developing an aesthetic sense in the rising generation. The spacious building includes exhibition halls, workshops, a concert hall and a library. There have been exhibitions of works by children from the Soviet republics, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, Britain, France, the USA, Canada, India and Japan. Every year there are several one-man exhibitions of works by children aged from three to 16. By tradition, all the works exhibited remain the property of the gallery, which now has a collection of over 100,000 drawings. When the modern artist David Siqueiros visited the gallery he called it "a true festival for the children of the planet".

On the opposite corner of Abovyan Street (in the direction you are walking) stands the former building of the Armenian Academy of Sciences. Now it houses two scholarly establishments, the **Insititute of Economics** and the **Language Institute.** The chapel of the **Katolike Church**, built in the thirteenth century, still stands in the courtyard.

The 16-storey **Ani Hotel**, with its several cafés and restaurants, towers over the corner to the right.

Further on Abovyan Street crosses the Boulevard Ring, and in the large square to the left there is a **statue** of the Armenian poet **Avetik Isaakyan** (1875-1957), unveiled in 1965.

Isaakyan's first collection of poetry entitled "Songs and Wounds" was published in 1897. The poet's best prerevolutionary work meditates in sorrow and anguish upon the fate of humankind and the injustice of life and is imbued with love for his country and people. His verses called on people to fight against national and social oppression. In 1911, Isaakyan emigrated because of persecution by the tsarist authorities. Abroad he wrote eastern legends and poems in prose, lyric verses which convey the poet's anguish at being parted from his own country.

In 1936, Isaakyan returned to Armenia, where, with renewed vigour he wrote new cycles of verse in which the key note is struck by his love for his country and people, for the land of his ancestors.

Isaakyan's poetry, with its humanism and great respect for human dignity, is profoundly linked with the history and culture of the Armenian people and with the best traditions of Russian and world literature.

Many people of Yerevan remember the figure of the famous poet, as he walked slowly along the streets, with his inevitable long cane. He would

slightly incline his head and reply warmly to the respectful greetings of the passers-by.

This is how sculptor Sergei Bagdasaryan has portrayed him, as he stops for a minute in thought, before continuing on his way.

Further along the square is the original white marble **The Hands Statue**, presented by the Italian city of Carrara and representing the friendship between the two twinned cities. Yerevan responded by sending the people of Carrara a model of a spring of water made of tufa, and decorated with national motifs, and an exact copy of this stands in the square too.

The second portion of the Boulevard Ring to the right of Abovyan street, is no less attractive and interesting with its swimming pools and fountains, and sports courts.

The unique **Chamber Music Hall**, designed by Stepan Kyurkchyan, dominates the architecture of this part of the boulevard. This is where organ and solo recitals are given. The original combination of ancient features with modern architectural forms makes this building one of the most remarcable in the city.

The façades of the **Yerevan University** buildings (No. 1), Mravyan Street (ulitsa Mravyana) also face onto the boulevard. The university is justly considered to be the best institution of higher education in the republic. It was founded on December 17, 1920, during the first month of Soviet power in Armenia. Lessons were held in the building of the former teachers' college by the light of oil-lamps. Now 15,000 students study at the university's 15 departments. Its new building was designed by architect Edmon Tigranyan.

Yet one more interesting building in this district is the **Chess Club**, designed by Zhanna Meshcheryakova, where the many adherents of this ancient game can watch competitions and play themselves. The hall on the first floor contains some relics: the table on which the world championship was fought out between Tigran Petrosyan (the winner) and Mikhail Botvinnik in 1963. The other table there is a gift from Fidel Castro, at which he played the world champion Petrosyan when he visited Havana, which friendly match ended in a draw.

A statue to the great Armenian revolutionary **Mikael Nalbandyan** stands on one of the corners of the Boulevard Ring.

Mikael Nalbandyan (1829-66) was a prominent humanist writer, a publicist with enormous knowledge who fought passionately for freedom. He shared the views of the revolutionary democrats of the middle of last century, Vissarion Belinsky, Alexander Herzen and Nikolai Chernyshevsky, and did not escape cruel persecution by the tsarist government.

He was imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg, where he spent three years in solitary confinement. He was subsequently exiled to the town of Kamyshin, where he died at the age of 37.

Nalbandyan's statue is the only one in Yerevan without a traditional pedestal. Tall and gaunt, with his head thrown proudly back, the writer stands almost on a level with the ground. Sculptor Nikogaios Nikogosyan has conveyed the image of the noble fighter, symbol of the progressive Armenian intellectuals, for whom national interests were intrinsically linked with internationalism in the very best sense of that word.

Let us continue our walk along Abovyan Street, which above the ring road, especially after the crossroads with **Kirov Street** (ulitsa Kirova), becomes very crowded and noisy. There are many higher educational establishments, forming an entire student campus, in this district. They include the Medical and Agricultural colleges, college of economics, and just a block away, the Marx Polytechnic and several technical schools.

There was not a single higher educational establishment in Armenia before the revolution; those wishing to study had to go to Moscow, St. Petersburg, Paris or Geneva. Now boys and girls from many countries, including Lebanon, Syria, Cyprus and the GDR study in Yerevan.

Apart from the university and establishments mentioned above, Yerevan also has a livestock and veterinary college, the Abovyan teachers' college, the Russian and foreign languages teachers' college, drama college and sports college. Every year the thousands of experts who graduate from these colleges find work according to the subject in which they have been trained. Students are given state grants, textbooks and accommodated in residences with all facilities for work and relaxation.

Opposite the economics college is a square, always crowded with students from the nearby colleges fond of studying here. Symbolically, a **statue of** the founder of the Armenian Young Communist League, **Gukas Gukasyan**, sculpted by Suren Stepanyan, stands at the entrance to the square. The figures "1899-1920" carved on the statue indicate the short life of this courageous youth, who boldly faced his death at the hands of the enemies of the revolution.

In the centre of the square you can see the dome of the small **university observatory**. This was where, in the 1930s, Armenian astronomists, who were later to gain world renown, took their observations. Of course, the equipment here has little in common with the powerful telescopes of the Byurakan Astrophysics Observatory on Mount Aragats, but nevertheless, it is here that many young people first decided to devote their life's work to astronomy, one of the world's most ancient sciences.

The street comes to an end in a circular square, in the centre of which stands the **statue of Khachatur Abovyan**, (1805-48), a great teacher and educational theorist, and founder of the new Armenian literature and language. The statue, sculpted by Suren Stepanyan, was unveiled in 1950.

Abovyan was born in the village of Kanaker (now a district within Yerevan), and as a child was a pupil at a religious seminary in Echmiadzin. For a long time his dream of improving his education and becoming active in public affairs remained but a dream until a happy chance led Abovyan to accompany a professor from Derpt University to the summit of Mount Ararat in 1829. The scientist helped the inquisitive youth to gain entrance to Derpt University. After he graduated, Abovyan taught in Tiflis (now Tbilisi), and from 1843 until his tragic disappearance (on April 2, 1848, he left his home never to return) he was an inspector at the Yerevan uyezd college. Abovyan's most important novel "Armenia's Wounds" is based on the events of the Russo-Persian War of 1826-28.

Another, earlier statue of Khachatur Abovyan has an interesting history. It was sculpted by Andreas Ter-Marukyan in 1913 in Paris. Packed and ready to be dispatched to Yerevan, the bronze statue lay for twenty years in a Paris warehouse due to some misunderstanding. When it was finally delivered in 1935, the statue was first erected on Abovyan Street, by the Moskva Cinema, and then moved to the children's park on the banks of the Razdan. In 1964, it found its permanent home by the Abovyan Museum in the house where he lived in Kanaker (Second Street).

Before leaving Abovyan Street, drop into the **Armenian Craft Museum** (No. 64), with its unique examples of silver and German silver jewellery, woodwork, carpets, earthenware and embossed goods. Armenia today has many skilled craftsmen, who continue and develop the traditional folk crafts, and their products have been successfully displayed in many Soviet cities, France, the USA, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Argentina, Japan, Algieria and Nigeria. You can buy articles produced by these craftsmen in the arts salon at No. 34, Tumanyan Street. The museum is open from 10:00 to 16:00 every day except Monday. Entrance is free.

If you have the time and the energy, we suggest that you now visit Akhtanak (Victory) Park on Kanaker Plateau. You can reach it from Abovyan Square (ploshchad Abovyana) by travelling one stop on any of buses nos. 2, 4, 14 or 24. While you are doing so, we will take the opportunity to tell you about another interesting building in this area which has almost certainly attracted your attention, the **Youth Centre**, a huge, very original building in design, which seems to put the finishing touch to Abovyan Street. It includes a marriage registry office, rest rooms for newlyweds, a

cinema-cum-concert hall with a capacity of 1,200, a hotel with 500 beds, an exhibition hall and gymnasiums. The last, slowly revolving storey houses a restaurant.

By using the very latest town planning methods, and all the potential of modern building materials, archiects Saribek Khachikyan, Artur Tarkhanyan, Grachia Pogosyan and Martin Zakharyan, and engineers Gerasim Gevorkyan, Igor Tsaturyan and Sergei Bagdasaryan have constructed a magnificent multifunctional building.

A 50-metre-high **obelisk**, built to celebrate **Soviet Armenia's 50th anniversary**, soars skywards at the spot where the bus turns towards our journey's end, Azatutyan Avenue.

Another few minutes, and we are in Akhtanak Park, now a thick wood protecting Yerevan from the north winds which at one time blew clouds of dust down upon the city.

The airy park has a large fun-fair, a restaurant with many summer-houses and an artificial lake of 12,000 square metres. Here stands the monument to the motherland of Armenia (sculptor Ara Arutyunyan, architect Rafael Israelyan), reaching up to the clouds. The figure of a woman, holding a sword half-drawn from its sheath, stands on an imposing pedestal (36 metres high). Inside this pedestal are the six storeys of the **"Soviet Armenia in the Great Patriotic War" Museum**, with its many interesting documents, photographs, letters and personal belongings of soldiers, and weapons from those years. The Grave of the Unknown Soldier, next to the monument, symbolises the eternal memory in which those who died in the war are held.

The museum is open from 11:00 to 16:00 every day except Monday. Entrance is free.

Akhtanak has still one more interesting monument, that to the peoples struggle for peace, its eight-metre-high hands stretching up to the sky expressing a range of emotions: anger and passionate protest against war, the pain of loss and confidence in victory. The monument, whose sculptor was Vagan Khachikyan, bears the inscription: "May there never be war, may nobody lose their sons."

THE ARMENIAN ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS EXHIBITION

A visit to this exhibition will provide much useful information for those among you interested in the republic's economy, science and culture, and will help you to substantiate some of the impressions obtained from your stay in Yerevan.

The exhibition is in the Leninsky district, one of the city's industrial areas which once held a multitude of private workshops and a small tannery, since replaced by modern enterprises producing compressors, lathes and spare car parts. The district, however, does not present a typical industrial landscape, as the architects, engineers and builders took especial care over the appearance of the buildings, protection of the environment, and provision of maximum facilities for those who live and work here.

Komitas Park stands behind cast-iron railings on the right **Ordzhonikidze Avenue** (prospekt Ordzhonikidze), the district's main road. Many outstanding figures of Armenia's artistic world are buried here, including Komitas (1869-1935), one of Armenia's great composers. His work came to an abrupt and tragic end in 1915; he was so disturbed by the Turkish government's horrific slaughter of the Armenians, that he became insane. He died in Paris, where the best French doctors were unable to cure him. The Pantheon is also the site of the graves of composers Romanos and Spiridon Melikyan, Aram Khachaturyan, poets Ovannes Ovannesyan and Avetik Isaakyan, writers Shirvanzade, Vrtanes Papazyan, Nairi Zaryan and Suren Kocharyan, historian and Academician Leo, artistes Ovannes Abelyan, Grachia Nersesyan and Vagram Papazyan, architects Toros Toramanyan and Alexander Tamanyan and artist Martiros Saryan.

At the Airenik (Motherland) Cinema the bus turns onto **Kalinin Street** (ulitsa Kalinina), which comes out onto **Spandaryan Square** (ploshchad Spandaryana).

Suren Spandaryan (1882-1916), professional revolutionary and prominent member of the Communist Party, was more than once arrested and imprisoned by the tsarist government. He died at the age of 34 in Siberia, where he was in permanent exile.

From Spandaryan Square the bus turns onto **Tsereteli Avenue** (prospekt Tsereteli), and in several minutes time drops you right by the gates of the **Armenian Economic Achievements Exhibition**, which mirrors the republic's economic and social progress. The main pavilion is in the shape of a dome, resting on four points.

This light, spacious building houses a display of all the kinds of industrial products currently manufactured in Armenia.

Below is some information about the republic's main economic sectors.

Power engineering is one of Armenia's most important industries, producing over 12,000 million kilowatt hours of electricity annually. There are hydraulic stations sited on waterfalls on the rivers Razdan and Vorotan and some thermal electric power plants. In 1976, the Armenian atomic power plant, the first in Transcaucasia, began supplying current.

The chemical industry is among the leading industrial sectors; the major reserves of minerals, excellent raw material for producing all kinds of chemical products, make it possible to rapidly expand the chemical industry. It accounts for ten per cent of the republic's total output.

The mechanical engineering and metal working industries provide precision machine tools, power transformers, mobile power stations, alternators, hydraulic pumps, compressors, fork-lift trucks, forge-and-press equipment and instruments. The fact that Armenia is second among the Union Republics for the production of electrical engineering products and fourth for the production of lathes, shows how fast these industries have expanded and what potential they have.

The radio electronics and instrument making industries are also developning rapidly. The most common manufactured goods are computers, measuring devices and instruments, control systems, automated process, and clocks and watches. The republic's instrument-making industry is fifth in the USSR in terms of output.

Non-ferrous metallurgy existed in Armenia before the revolution, but it only really began to develop after the last war. Existing mines have been reconstructed and expanded, and new deposits have been discovered, which means that Armenia is now third in the country for copper production.

Building materials are one of Armenia's most valuable resources, and the deposits of tufa are thought to be virtually inexhaustible. The main deposits are near the town of Artika to the north-west of Yerevan. Normally, because of transport problems, building materials are not moved far afield, but Armenia is in this respect an exception, because its tufa has been used to build HEP stations on the Volga and Dnieper, many buildings in Tbilisi, Baku, Kiev and Sochi, and to face the building of the French Embassy in Moscow.

Armenian basalts, granites and marbles are also renowned. At one time stone was Armenia's bane, the age-old enemy of the

farmer, but now it is its wealth and pride. Stone is also used to produce yarn and various dyes, as you can see for yourself at the exhibition.

Light industry is represented by carpets, ready-to-wear garments, knitted goods, silk, woolen and cotton materials and shoes; **the food and drink industry** by wines and brandies, canned fruit and vegetables, very high quality cheeses, mineral waters and tobacco and cigarettes.

The republic's **agriculture** has developed many new branches during the Soviet period, although it has lost its primary importance. It concentrates on the cultivation of cereals, grapes, fruits, vegetables, potatoes, technical crops such as sugarbeet, tobacco and geraniums, and on livestock breeding.

The expanding links between the Union republics have enabled Armenia to develop her economy. The RSFSR and the Ukraine provide iron and steel, coal, technological equipment, excavators, bulldozers, tractors and other machinery on a loan basis, while Byelorussia supplies lorries, wood working lathes and construction and road-laying machinery. Electric locomotives, oil products, rolled iron, pipes, insulating materials and electric welding equipment come from the neighbouring republics of Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Education and culture in Armenia are of a high standard. There are almost 700,000 people studying in over 1,500 general education schools. The republic has roughly 70 centres for pioneers and schoolchildren, over 100 music and art schools, more than 60 secondary specialised educational establishments, 13 higher educational establishments, approximately 1,340 libraries, of which 980 are in rural areas, over 1,200 clubs, more than 40 museums and 14 professional theatres, three of them for children.

The medical service is yet another major part of the economy, and is always in the centre of attention for the Party and republican government. Armenia has many treatment centres, sanatoriums, rest homes, and consultancies for women and children. There are 35 doctors for every 10,000 head of population. Medical treatment, as elsewhere in the Soviet Union, is free of charge.

You will see an interesting table on one of the stands:

1920	—	720,000
1940	—	1,320,000
1959	—	1,763,000
1970	—	2,492,000
1980	—	3,079,000

Those figures represent Armenia's population, which is constantly increasing as a result of a natural growth, migration from other republics and Armenians returning from many other countries.

MORE SIGHTS TO SEE

If you have some time to spare, may we suggest a few more sights for you to see in Yerevan. First of all, there is **Barekamutyan Street** (ulitsa Barekamutyan), which starts from the junction of Lenin Avenue and Moskovyan Street, by the Spendiarov Theatre of Opera and Ballet. In the square by the crossroads stands one of the few, indeed perhaps the only statue in the world, of an architect. This is the **statue of Alexander Tamanyan**, sculpted by Artashes Ovsepyan, an expression of the gratitude of the people of Yerevan to the outstanding town planner who did so much for their city.

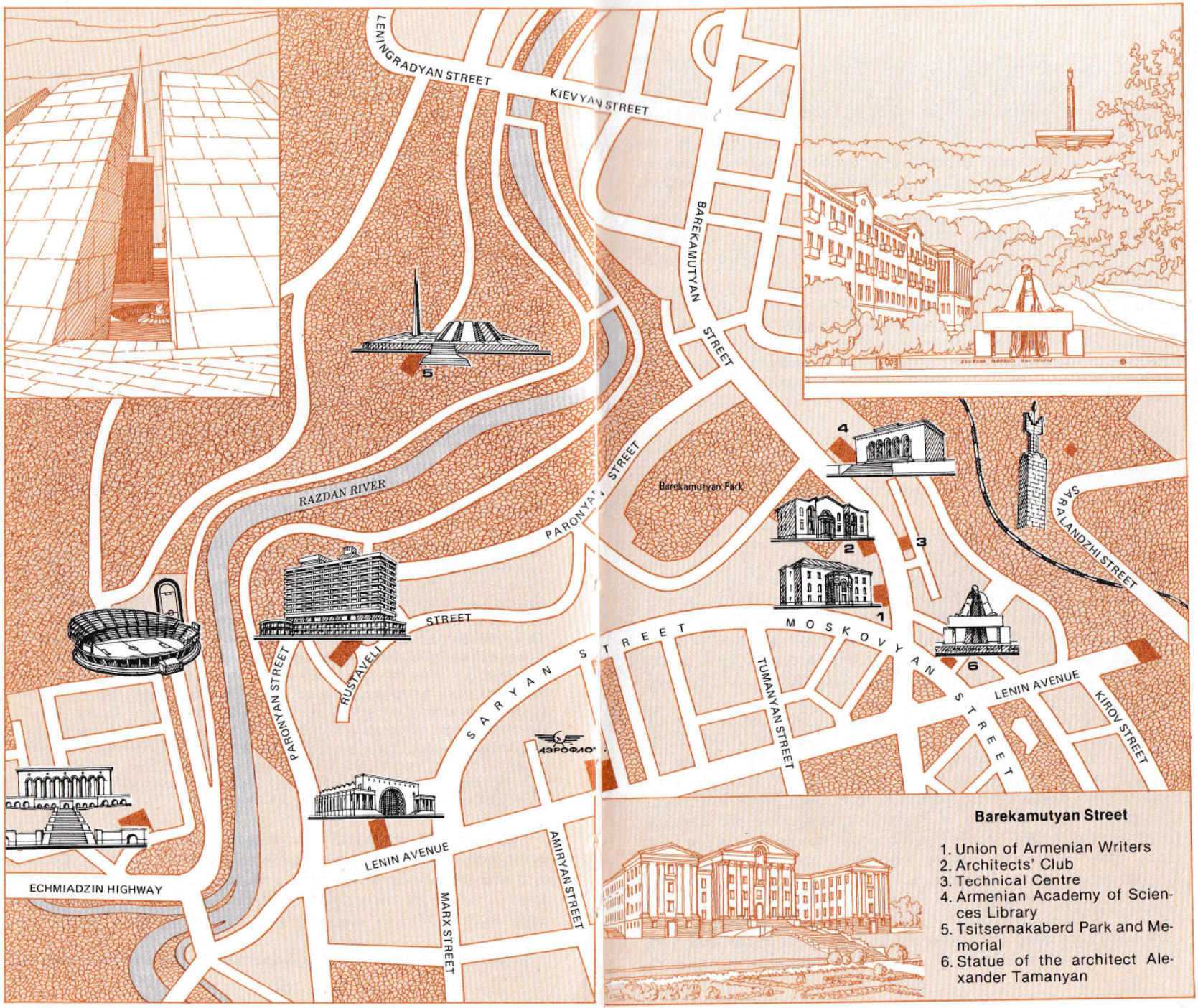
On Moskovyan Street, at No. 40, you can see the **museum of Ovanes Tumanyan**, the great Armenian poet.

A native of the high mountain village of Lsakh (now Tumanyan), Ovanes Tumanyan (1869-1923) produced masterpieces of national poetry. His verse reflects the sorrow of the Armenian people and a burning protest against their oppressors. His epic works are particularly important in that they depict everyday life in an Armenian village. Some of his poems take historical events as their theme, and are imbued with the ideals of patriotism and the liberation struggle against the foreign invaders.

Tumanyan also devoted a lot of his time to legends and ballads, reworking folk tales and stories. He translated works by Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov, Nikolai Nekrasov, Maxim Gorky, Byron, Heinrich Heine, Wolfgang Goethe and other writers into Armenian. Tumanyan's poems have been published in 40 languages of the Soviet Union and foreign countries. Many of his poems have become folk songs, and his poems and ballads have been used to create classical musical productions, still popular today.

The nineteen rooms of the museum contain an interesting exhibition which describes the life and work of the poet. On the first storey there is a re-creation of the flat in which Tumanyan lived in Tbilisi for many years (he is buried there). The museum is open from 11:00 to 17:00 every day except Monday. Entrance is free.

Moskovyan Street becomes **Saryan Street** (ulitsa Saryana), so



Barekamutyan Street

1. Union of Armenian Writers
2. Architects' Club
3. Technical Centre
4. Armenian Academy of Sciences Library
5. Tsitsernakaberd Park and Memorial
6. Statue of the architect Alexander Tamanyan

named after Martiros Saryan (1880-1972) and here too stands a museum—a memorial one to the artist, at No. 3. A building containing an exhibition of Saryan's pictures is attached to the small residence with its workshop.

Martiros Saryan studied in the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. He was greatly influenced by Russian art, especially by such painters as Valentin Serov and Konstantin Korovin.

Even Saryan's first canvases show his penchant for bright colours, his original vision of the world around him, expressiveness and unusual composition. His cycle of works painted after trips to Turkey, Iran and Egypt first brought him renown.

In 1921, Saryan settled in Yerevan, and from then on Armenia, its countryside and people, became the main theme in his work. He is particularly famous for his landscapes, including the astonishing "Saryan's Armenia", in which he celebrates the beauty of his land renewed. He also painted a fair number of portraits, which are remarkable for their psychological depth and philosophical approach. Saryan was also productive as a book illustrator and stage designer. Exhibitions of his works have often been held in Moscow, Leningrad, Rostov, Tbilisi, Baku, and in dozens of countries abroad. Martiros Saryan was awarded the title of People's Artist of the USSR, he was member of the USSR Academy of Arts, member of the Armenian Academy of Sciences, winner of the Lenin and State Prizes of the USSR and was made Hero of Socialist Labour.

The museum is open from 10:30 to 16:00 (to 15:00 on Wednesdays) every day except Thursday. Entrance is free.

Barekamutyan Street is thought to be one of the most beautiful in Yerevan. The two- and three-storey mansions hidden behind trees give the street an especial charm. It is a street for lovers: even the air is somehow special here, heavy with the fragrance of the soil, sun and flowers. Perhaps for this reason writers, poets and dramatists chose it for their place of residence, the **Union of Armenian Writers,** at No. 3.

The work of many outstanding Armenian, Russian and Soviet writers is linked with Yerevan. Egishe Charents (1897-1937), whose work is a passionate celebration of socialist changes in Armenia, wrote here, as did Avetik Isaakyan (1875-1957), a major modern poet, Alexander Shirvanzade (1858-1935), prose writer and dramatist, people's writer of Armenia and Azerbaijan, Derenik Demiryan (1877-1956), author of historical novels and plays and many other Armenian writers who have countributed to the flourishing of Armenian literature.

The history of Armenian and Russian literary links goes back to the time of Kievan Rus (ninth to twelfth centuries). However, they only really took deep roots when Eastern Armenia became part of Russia. The ancient land of Armenia attracted and inspired

Russian poets by its austere beauty, and rich heroic past. The first great Russian writer to visit Armenia was Alexander Griboyedov. He had a thorough knowledge of the past and present of the country, and helped to liberate it from the Persian yoke. He was one of the people who drew up the Turkmanchai Peace Treaty of 1828, renowned as a diplomatic achievement.

Alexander Pushkin visited Armenia in the summer of 1829, a trip which he described in his essay "Journey to Arzrum". One of the passes in the mountains is called after him.

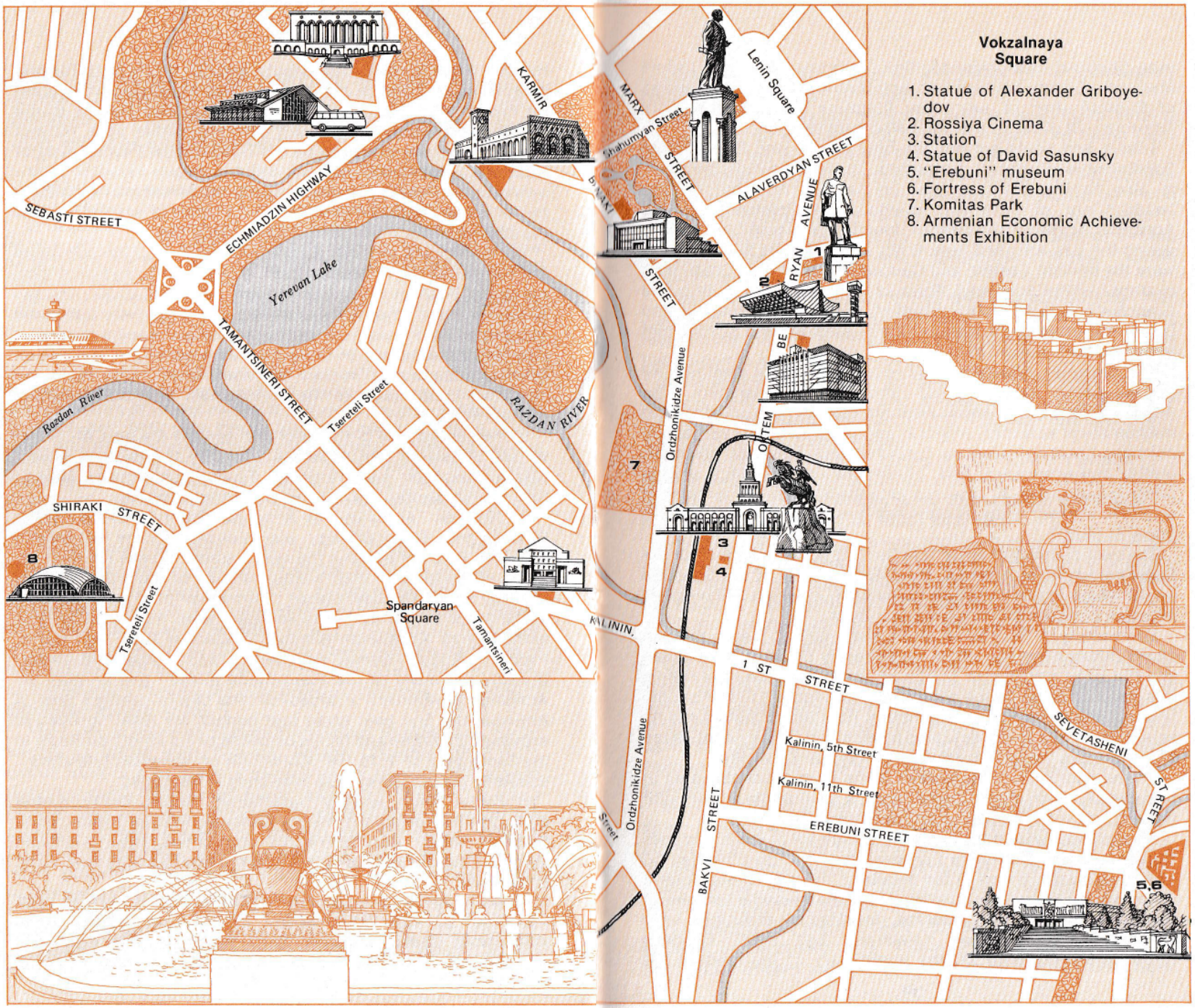
The Armenians too took a great interest in Russian culture. In the first half of the nineteenth century many works by Ivan Krylov, Alexander Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov, Vasily Zhukovsky, Evgeny Baratynsky and other Russian writers and poets were translated into Armenian. Precisely at that time Russia showed a reciprocal interest in the history of the Armenian people. The Institute of Oriental Languages, opened in Moscow in 1815, made an important contribution to the development of Russo-Armenian cultural links.

In the second half of the ninteenth century the best Armenian writers translated into Armenian works by the Russian writers Nikolai Nekrasov, Ivan Turgenev, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin, Lev Tolstoy and Anton Chekhov.

In 1916 an "Anthology of Armenian Poetry", edited by the Russian poet Valery Bryusov, was published for the first time in Moscow. Bryusov wrote in the introduction: "I have found in my study of Armenia an inexhaustible source of the most uplifting spiritual joys." The best pieces of Armenian poetry, dating from as far back as the early Middle Ages, were translated for this anthology by Konstantin Balmont, Alexander Blok, Ivan Bunin, Fyodor Sologub, Sergei Gorodetsky and Sergei Shervinsky. Bryusov did many of the translations himself and in 1923 the Armenian government awarded him the title of people's poet of Armenia, the first poet given that honour, for great services to Armenian literature and on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday. In the same year of 1916 the "Collection of Armenian Literature", edited by Maxim Gorky, was published in Petrograd.

In Soviet times, Anatoly Lunacharsky, Maxim Gorky, Andrei Bely, Osip Mandelshtam, Nikolai Tikhonov, Mikhail Svetlov, Boris Slutsky, Robert Rozhdestvensky and others have published essays, travel notes, poetry and descriptions resulting from visits to Armenia.

Works by Armenian poets writing in the Soviet period have been translated by such great writers as Pavel Antokolsky, Anna Akhmatova, Samuil Marshak, Boris Pasternak, Igor Selvinsky, Alexander Bezymensky, Konstantin Simonov, Vera Zvyagintseva,


Vokzalnaya Square
1. Statue of Alexander Griboyedov
2. Rossiya Cinema
3. Station
4. Statue of David Sasunsky
5. "Erebuni" museum
6. Fortress of Erebuni
7. Komitas Park
8. Armenian Economic Achievements Exhibition
Lenin Square
MARX STREET
Shahumyan Street
KARMIR
ALAVERDYAN STREET
AVENUE
SEBASTI STREET
ECHMIADZIN HIGHWAY
Yerevan Lake
TAMANTSINERI STREET
Tsereteli Street
Razdan River
RAZDAN RIVER
Ordzhonikidze Avenue
SHIRAKI STREET
Spandaryan Square
KALININ
1 ST STREET
Kalinin, 5th Street
Kalinin, 11th Street
EREBUNI STREET
SEVETASHENI
BAKVI STREET

Irina Snegova, Bela Ahkmadullina, Veronika Tushnova, Leonid Martynov, Evgeny Yevtushenko and Naum Grebnev. More works of Russian than of any other literature are translated into Armenian, 70 titles on average being published annually.

Lovers and poets are not the only people who have chosen Barekamutyan Street for themselves. The lyrical atmosphere here is also familiar to scientists, normally serious people. The headquarters of Armenian science, the **Presidium of the Armenian Academy of Sciences**, founded on November 29, 1943, during the war, are sited here at No. 24. Among its first members were the brilliant Eastern and Caucasian expert Iosif Orbeli (first chairman of the Academy), historian Akop Manandyan, linguists Grachiya Acharyan, Manuk Abegyan, Stepanos Malkhasyan and Grigor Kapantsyan, physiologist Ezras Asratyan and astronomist Viktor Ambartsumyan, its current chairman.

The Armenian Academy of Sciences now has 44 members, 48 corresponding members and three foreign members. The Academy consists of seven sections covering the physical and mathematical sciences, physical and technical and mechanical sciences, chemical sciences, Earth sciences, biological sciences, history and economics, and philosophy and philology, uniting under its auspices 30 research establishments. The number of scientific workers in the republic has now reached the impressive figure of 18,000.

The next building of white tufa (No. 26) is the **Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Armenia**, the standing body of the Supreme Soviet which is the republic's parliament, to which 340 people's deputies are elected once every five years.

Barekamutyan St. comes to an end where it meets **Kievyan Street** (ulitsa Kievyan), which runs steeply down to the Razdan and the large single-span bridge which crosses the river ravine. The distance between the arches' foundations is 110 metres, the bridge's total length being 364 metres, its width 26 metres and its height 58 metres. It was designed by architect Grigory Agababyan and engineers Varos Pinadzhyan and Nikolai Slavinsky.

On the right bank of the Razdan is the large residential area of **Achapnyak**, which means "right bank", a town within a town, with its own schools, cinemas, shops and hospitals.

Immediately beyond the bridge, on a high hill to the left, stands **Tsitsernakaberd** (Swallow's Fortress) **Park**. Its trees, planted on what was waste ground in the middle of the 'fifties, now form a dense wood. On the hill's summit stands **the memorial complex to the victims of the 1915 genocide,** designed by architects Artur Tarkhanyan and Sashur Kalashyan and artist Ovannes Knachatryan. On April 24, the anniversary of the start of the

bloody slaughter, hundreds of thousands of local residents gather here in sorrowful silence.

The monument has two sections: massive basalt slabs bending in grief over an eternal flame, and a pointed mast rising high, symbolising the rebirth of the Armenian people.

Vokzalnaya Square (Vokzalnaya ploshchad) is yet another interesting place to visit, most conveniently reached by metro from Lenin Square station. You can also travel by road transport from the Rossiya Cinema on the corner of **Oktemberyan Avenue** (prospekt Oktemberyan) and **Khandzhyan Street** (ulitsa Khandzhyana).

Visitors to Yerevan in the 'thirties were astonished when they passed a huge field several kilometres in length before they reached the town. Now the city has spread to such an extent that the station is almost in the centre.

In the centre of the square, surrounded by the Railway Workers' Cultural Centre, a cinema and residential blocks, stands the **statue of David Sasunsky**, hero of the Armenian folk epic poem. The sculptor was Ervand Kochar.

The image of David, who fearlessly defended his people from foreign invaders, is similar to that of the warriors in Russian folk legends. In 1938 many people in the Soviet Union celebrated the millennium of the legend of David Sasunsky.

From generation to generation, from century to century, people have handed down tales of David's deeds, his gigantic strength. The episode of the crucial battle when David, unwilling to shed the blood of the enemy soldiers, challenged their leader Msyr-melik, ruler of the Arab caliphate of Msyr, to a duel and defeated him, is particularly enthralling.

The warrior-like figure of David Sasunsky astride his faithful steed Dzhalali embodies the freedom-loving aspirations of the Armenian people over many centuries. His hands hold his sword of lighting, ever ready to repel invaders; water flows from the bowl above the pedestal, signifying that when the cup of the people's patience overflows, there is no quarter for oppressors and enslavers.

Much has been written about the statue of David Sasunsky. Since the time of its unveiling in 1959, it has travelled the whole planet over, depicted on postcards and magazine covers, in booklets, photographs, and illustrations to books and travel guides. It has become a symbol of the Armenian people's love of freedom and of their capital, Yerevan.

We suggest that you complete this tour by visiting the **fortress Erebuni** on Arin-berd Hill, reaching it either by car from Vokzalnaya Square along **Bakvi** and **Erebuni streets** (ulitsa Bakvi

and ulitsa Erebuni), or by bus No. 15, trolleybuses Nos. 2 and 4 and trams Nos. 7 and 8.

The fortress was erected by the Urartu king Argishti I in 782 B. C.

Urartu was a state in Asia Minor (ninth to sixth centuries B. C.), which at the height of its power embraced all the Armenian foothills. It also subordinated areas south of Lake Van and near Lake Urmiya. Erebuni Fortress and the excavations of other towns such as Teishebaini (on the outskirts of Yerevan), Argishtikhipili (on the left bank of the Araks) and Menuakhipili (on the northern slopes of Mount Ararat) show that the Urartu state enjoyed a very advanced cultural level. Their buildings are astonishing in their magnificence, well planned and elegant.

Urartu fell in the sixth century B. C., to be replaced by the ancient Armenian State, which united local tribes including the direct ancestors of the Armenians, the Khayas and the Armens.

Excavations of Erebuni Fortress began back in the nineteenth century, but they were conducted most intensively in the 1950s when the slab with the cuneiform inscription was found, telling of the year in which the fortress, and thus at the same time Yerevan, was founded.

During the excavations the walls of the mighty citadel, the remains of a palace with a room measuring 440 square metres, residential sites, grain stores and great jugs for holding wine and oil have been found. The walls of the palace were decorated with frescoes depicting religious and hunting scenes, animals and plants.

A museum, whose exhibits are constantly being supplemented by new finds stands at the bottom of Arin-berd Hill.

The museum is open from 10:00 to 18:00 every day except Monday.

TOURS OUTSIDE YEREVAN

Armenia is justly called an open-air museum, for this country of stone preserves many relics of the distant past. This "museum" includes over 4,000 ancient monuments, and for many years their beauty and perfection have been affording people aesthetic pleasure and inspiring sincere admiration for the daring of their creators' intentions which remain unsubdued by time.

Pagan temples, monasteries tucked away in the mountains, *khachkars* (crosses carved in stone) adorned with extremely intricate carving, and the richest ornaments on the walls of churches: all these await you in the mountains and valleys of Armenia. In addition to all this there is the beauty created by nature itself, and with which the Armenian land has been so generously endowed.

GARNI

Garni, temple of beauty and the sun, is 28 kilometres from Yerevan. Your route takes you along streets of the city you already know. As you turn right at the statue of Khachatur Abovyan, you cross the bridge over the small but temperamental river Gedar, which has more than once caused the city great problems. Many people here remember the summer of 1946, when this seemingly humble little river caused widespread flooding. Today the Gedar's cantankerous nature is held firmly in check by concrete banks.

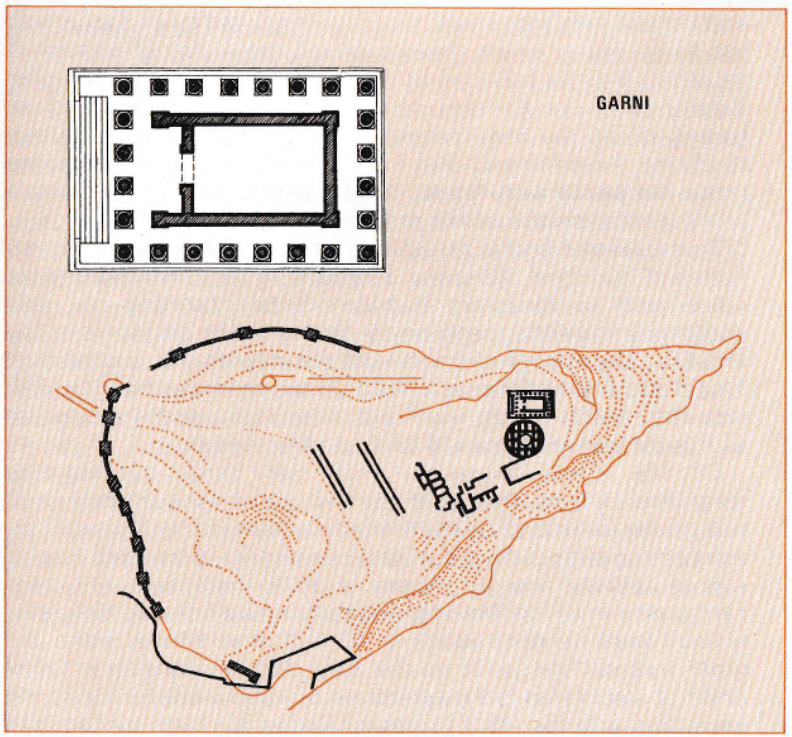
One more turn brings you into the Avan ravine, with cosy little cottages perched on the left slope. In order to win even minute little plots of land from the mountain, people had to build "terraces", steps marked out with stones and filled with soil.

This picturesque spot is the site of the **Yerevan Zoo**, a place where the city children love to spend the day, admiring all Armenia's fauna and exotic animals from all parts of the world.

A little further on and to the left, you will begin to see the outline of the **Nork residential area** on its high plateau. It was built only recently, just over ten years ago, and it now has the best facilities of all Yerevan's districts. Multi-storey blocks of flats, schools, kindergartens, consumer service centres, shops, green squares and parks surrounding the residential buildings, and good transport to and from the centre make Nork exceptionally convenient for its residents.

A mere thirty minutes separate Yerevan's youngest district from the days of antiquity. Before venturing into the deepest past, however, pause briefly by the hill on the right side of the road, which affords a splendid view of many colours crowned by the two summits of Mount Ararat. Many travellers, who are no strangers to magnificent views, claim that no summit in the world can compete with Mount Ararat's beauty. This may be somewhat of an exaggeration: doubtless Mont Blanc, Vesuvius, Everest and Fujiyama have their own individual charms, but Masis, as the Armenians call Ararat, with its snow-capped peaks sparkling in the sun, does indeed create an unforgettable impression.

On the hill there stands a **stone arch** erected to the Soviet Armenian poet **Egishe Charents**, who frequently admired Ararat from this spot. The architect was Rafael Israelyan. Some lines from one of the poet's best poems "My Armenia", have been carved into the stone:



The world at large you wander may, yet our Masis's a peak unique.
Yes, wise old Ararat I love, as endless glory's path.

Several more minutes of driving, and you are approaching Garni, one of Armenia's most ancient architectural complexes, which includes a fortress, palace and pagan temple (third century B.C.). On this high triangular plateau, which plunges from a height of 300 metres to the river Azat below, stand the remains of a powerful fortress designed for defence, the Armenian summer royal residence. Huge basalt slabs, unmoved by centuries, bear witness to the power of the masters they protected. Yet those unscalable walls were to fall before treachery and betrayal, the victim of which was the Armenian tsar Mitridat, who perished at the hand of his nephew Radomist, supported by the Roman Empire. Radomist, however, did not rule for long: he was overthrown with the help of the Parthian State, a rival of Rome, and the Armenian throne passed to a new king, Trdat I. Mighty Rome, of course, could not reconcile itself to this turn of events, and immediately sent some troops, commanded by Corbulon, into the Ararat valley where they destroyed the Armenian capital of Artashat. But the fortunes of war betrayed the Roman legions: Trdat I dealt the Romans an unexpected and crushing blow, having strung the once dangerous troops out along the valley. Realising, nevertheless, that he would never survive unless he made his peace with Rome, Trdat I agreed to Emperor Nero's proposal that he accept the crown of Armenia from his hands.

That splendid and impressive journey made by the Armenian tsar and his three thousand retainers in nine months almost culminated in disaster. Stubborn Trdat, refusing to obey customary etiquette, declined to disarm in the presence of the Emperor. Happily for all concerned the dispute was settled, and Trdat I returned to Armenia as its crowned sovereign bearing with him 150 million dinars, as a gift from Nero, and a retinue of architects and craftsmen to decorate his residence.

On his return, therefore, Trdat set about building the magnificent pagan Temple of the Sun, which was finished in 66 A.D., in the fortress of Garni. The temple survived for 17 centuries, astonishing and uplifting people by its perfect forms, and fragile, almost ethereal beauty. Then, in 1679 there was a violent earthquake in which the temple was destroyed. It was only after almost three hundred years, in 1910-11, that Nikolai Marr, the great Russian specialist on the East and his colleague Yakov Smirnov discovered this masterpiece of world architecture during excavations. In the 1930s Professor Nikolai Buniatov managed to

establish the temple's original appearance after a careful study of the surviving fragments.

Reconstruction work began in 1966 and lasted for ten years. Those in charge of the project had to come to terms with every architectural detail, to fix the precise position of each stone found. As soon as the project was drawn up, a number of technical problems had to be resolved. The appropriate building material had to be chosen and then treated by the same process as had been used by the ancients. For the first time in restoration work epoxy resin was used to stick the components into the damaged places. Alexander Sainyan, responsible for drawing up the plans and also scientific manager of the work, was awarded the State Prize of Armenia for this restoration work in 1976.

Now that you are familiar with the history of this, the USSR's best preserved relic of ancient culture, let us examine it in more detail.

The soft scrolls, lion's masks and the fluttering, falling leaves seem to have been moulded rather than carved into the stone: architecture and the plastic arts are here inseparably combined. The small, square room with its sacrificial altar is surrounded by 24 columns which are crowned by astonishingly intricate carving on the capitals. An elaborately decorated gable roof rises over this cool building, which on the adoption of Christianity became the royal summer residence.

The remains of the vast palace and the nearby palace baths, built on the model of the ancient Roman baths, are also of interest. The bath house was artificially heated by hot air passing through earthenware pipes which ran under the floor. The semi-circular entrance room still has part of its mosaic floor, laid in pebbles of 15 colours and depicting a theme from Greek mythology. A mysterious inscription in Greek, "we laboured for no reward", catches the eye. It may be a complaint made by the slaves, which would seem rather inappropriate in the royal bath house, or it may be an expression of the craftsmen's pride in their selfless work.

Excavations continue on the site, and many interesting household utensils, fragments of ancient marble sculptures and Greek, Aramaic and Armenian inscriptions have been found. We can only guess at how many secrets are still guarded by this triangular plateau above the rushing river Azat.

GEGARD

Six kilometres from Garni is the cave monastery of Gegard, one of Armenia's most interesting architectural relics from the Middle Ages. Our first information about it dates back to the fourth century. The monastery was subsequently plundered and destroyed by foreign troops.

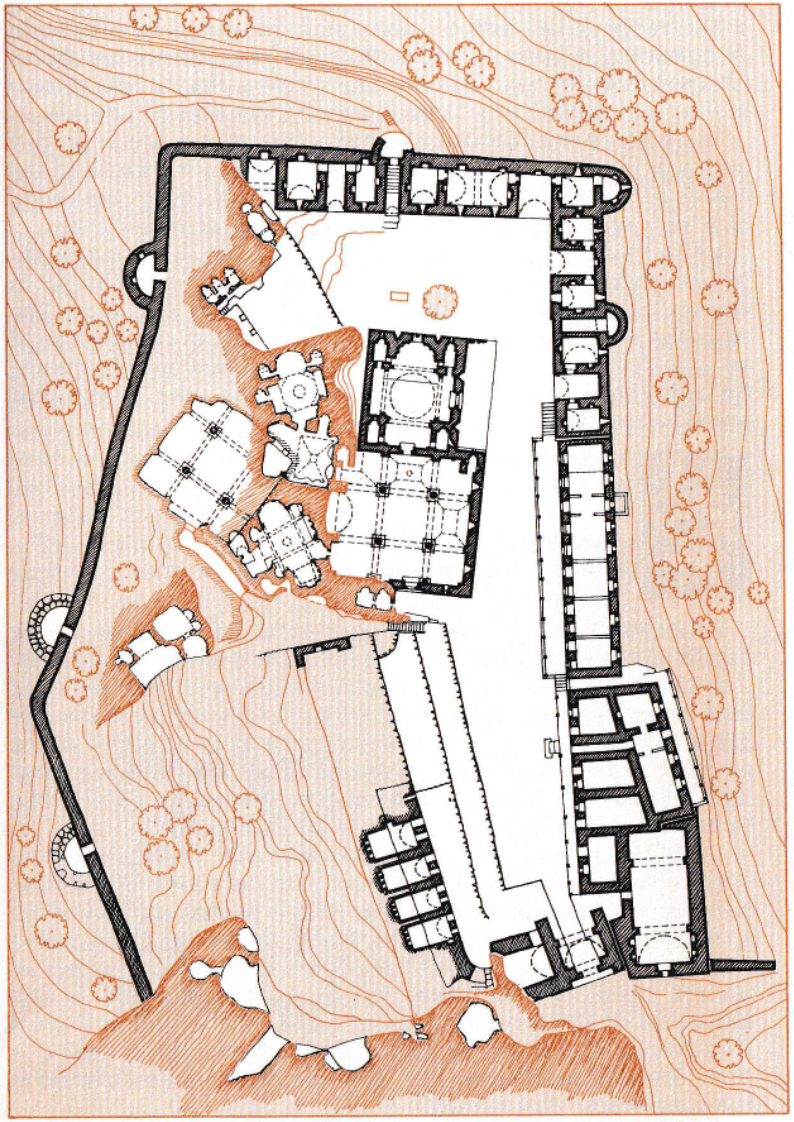
At the beginning of the thirteenth century Gegard passed into the possession of princes Ivane and Zakhare Dolgoruki (Long-Arm), founders of the Armenian Zakharid dynasty. Both brothers held high appointments in the court of the Georgian tsarina Tamara; they were talented military officers and wise statesmen. They liberated much of Armenia from the Seldzhuks, for which they were made tsars of Armenia. Under the Zakharid dynasty the country's economic and cultural life revived, and new churches, secular buildings and libraries began to be built.

It was during this period that the cave monastery of Gegard was built; here the surface construction and cave churches hewn into the cliff form a compositional and stylistic whole. The main Cathedral of the Virgin Mary was erected in 1215. The Zakharid coat of arms, a lion tearing apart a bull, is carved above the entrance. At a somewhat later date an entrance vestibule was attached to the church: this is a typically Armenian structure, used both for religious and secular functions, such as meetings of various kinds and the burial of important officials.

The modest external appearance contrasts sharply with the magnificence of the interior. The ceiling, with its stone carving reminiscent of waves of stalactites, is particularly delightful. The northern wall forms part of the natural rock face, in which two passage ways have been channeled. They lead to the most original part of the whole complex: two churches hewn in the depths of the rocks. This rock itself forms the material for all the columns, arches, vaults and relief work. There is one more unique feature: a steep staircase runs up the cliff-face, leading into an artificial tunnel which brings you onto the upper tier, a rectangular vaulted room.

Galdzag, one of the most respected architects in Armenian history, was responsible for this astonishing structure. His name is inscribed near one of the small windows.

The name of the monastery, Gegard, originates from the legend of the spear with which a Roman soldier pierced Christ's body as he hung on the cross. It is said that this spear was preserved in



Armenia, in what is now Echmiadzin Cathedral, as a holy relic, and that in the ninth century it was transferred to a more secure place, the Airivank Monastery, which has since then been called Gegard, meaning "spear" in Armenian.

The rectangular vertical stone slabs covered with intricate lacey carving which you have seen around Yerevan are *khachkars* (crosses in stone), so-called because of the compulsory inclusion in the relief carving of a cross, symbol of the Tree of Life.

There are many of these *khachkars* throughout Armenia: they were erected not only as gravestones, but also to mark all kinds of events such as victory in battle, the founding of a town, the laying of a foundation stone and even the receipt of an inheritance.

While there are several thousand *khachkars* in Armenia, you will find no two alike. Each craftsman used his own imagination to devise the decorative work and add sculptural elements. The height of the *khachkars* varies from several dozen centimetres to several metres, and some of them have even been architecturally framed. These small memorial relics are the work of the best stone carvers of the Middle Ages.

ECHMIADZIN

Echmiadzin, one of the country's most ancient towns, was capital of the Armenian state from the second to fourth centuries.

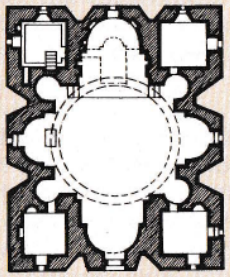
It lies 20 kilometres from Yerevan, along a wide highway lined with flowerbeds and ornamental trees. On the left even rows of grapevines stretch out to the sugar-loaf peaks of Ararat and a range of mountains. This is the Ararat Valley, the republic's most agriculturally productive area. A network of irrigation canals have transformed this once arid spot into a fertile garden.

Vine cultivation, the most ancient branch of agriculture in Armenia, holds pride of place here. It is no mere coincidence that bunches of grapes and vine leaves form a permanent part of the national ornamental motifs. The Ararat Valley might be called Armenia's largest orchard. It has a particularly large number of apricot trees; not everybody is aware that Armenia is the birthplace of the apricot (the latin name for the fruit is *Prunus Armeniaca*). Alexander the Great was responsible for taking it from Armenia to Greece, and later the Romans established it throughout southern Europe.

The peach tree is also a long-time resident of Armenia and almost half of the republic's peach orchards are to be found here in the Ararat Valley. There is in fact hardly a fruit which does not grow on this fertile soil: there are apples, pears, quince, cherries, plums, watermelons, melons and also all kinds of vegetables. The Ararat Valley produces one-third of the geraniums cultivated in the Soviet Union, and they are used to manifacture a costly essential oil for the perfume industry.

But let us turn from agriculture to Echmiadzin. Immediately at the entrance to the town stands the **Church of St. Ripsime,** a marvellous example of the architecture of the Middle Ages. The legend of St. Ripsime goes back to the time of the spread of Christianity. Ripsime fled with some friends from the persecution of the Roman emperor Diocletian to Armenia, where, upon hearing of her beauty, the Armenian tsar Trdat III decided to take her to wife. As a Christian, she declined to marry a pagan tsar, and, after cruel torture, was executed. A small chapel was built on the site of the martyr's death. In the seventh century Catholicos Komitas ordered it to be demolished, and a magnificent church erected in its place. Two inscriptions, one inside the church above the eastern apse, and the other outside above the western entrance, tell us that it was built in 618.

The sharp, impressive forms of the church are reminiscent of a mighty fortress, while the elaborate detail of the interior creates



CHURCH OF ST. RIPSIME

an effect of ethereality and airiness. The constructors of this church, like those of other Armenian buildings with a central dome, were obviously excellent engineers as well as talented architects, for the church has stood the test of time, unmoved by earth tremors.

Echmiadzin is a smart and cosy town, the building material being tufa quarried nearby and in Artika. Here, as elsewhere in the republic, industry is expanding, and the world of culture is thriving in all its variety. The **Cathedral** is the main tourist attraction in the town. Legend has it that on this spot Christ descended from the heavens and pointed to the site on which the Cathedral was to be built; it was to be called Echmiadzin, which means "the only begotten son came down to earth".

Echmiadzin Cathedral was the first Christian church to be built on the territory of the Soviet Union. The present church (the main body) was built in the 'eighties of the fifth century, on the site of the ancient church, which, according to legend, was erected at the beginning of the fourth century, when Christianity was adopted in Armenia. The cathedral was rebuilt on several occasions, and therefore has architectural features from various periods. Only the four bases, on which the four pilons of the new structure were erected, remain of the fifth century church. A bell-tower was built, and three rotundas and a vestry were added. The frescoes were painted by artists from the Ovnatanyan family in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, who are also the authors of several paintings preserved in the Echmiadzin collection. The cathedral houses a museum, where various relics, manuscripts, church wealth and gifts from abroad are exhibited.

Echmiadzin is the seat of the Armenian (Gregorian) Church, to which all Armenian bishops in the Soviet Union and abroad are subordinate. Every seven years there is a solemn ceremony of myrrh preparation here, attended by thousands of Christians from all over the world.

Near the cathedral stands the residence of the Supreme Patriarch, the All-Armenian Catholicos Vazgen I. He was born in Romania in 1908, and elected Catholicos in 1955. He has been awarded the Order of Friendship Between Peoples by the Soviet Government for his work to strengthen peace between nations.

On church festivals a procession from the Catholicos' residence passes under the Trdat Gates, which stand rather like a triumphal arch in the Cathedral grounds. The town also has a religious seminary, and is the home of the religious periodical *Echmiadzin*.

Another interesting building is the **Church of St. Gayane**, built in honour of Gayane, Ripsime's wet-nurse, who also died a martyr's death in 630.

It stands on the southern outskirts of the town, its slender silhouette forming a picturesque view against the background of Ararat's snowy summits. The church has unfortunately not come down to us in its original form, and only the interior has retained its austerity and purity of form.

The memorial complex in Saradarapat, 25 kilometres from Echmiadzin, is an outstanding feature of the Ararat Valley. It was built in memory of perhaps the most decisive battle in the history of the Armenian people, fought against the Turks to determine their survival or extinction as a nation.

In 1918 the Turkish forces, violating the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty with Soviet Russia, crossed the border with the aim of destroying Eastern Armenia and capturing the whole of Transcaucasia. They attacked Alexandropol (now Leninakan) and then penetrated the Armenian interior, the Ararat Valley. A fierce battle took place from May 22 to 26, which led to the Turks' defeat and retreat.

The memorial park here was opened in May, 1968. On both sides of the entrance gigantic winged bulls of red tufa stand as if protecting the victory for which such a high price was paid. Steps lead up to a wide square, in the centre of which rises a 35-metre-high open-work bell-tower, which can be seen from afar. The nine bells ring out annually on the anniversary of the victory. The "Eagles' Path", symbolising the spirit of the fearless warriors, leads to the arch-like "Victory Wall" (55 metres long and 7 metres high), on which the relief work depicts steeds of fire, scenes from the battle and the figure of a woman and child, symbolising rebirth.

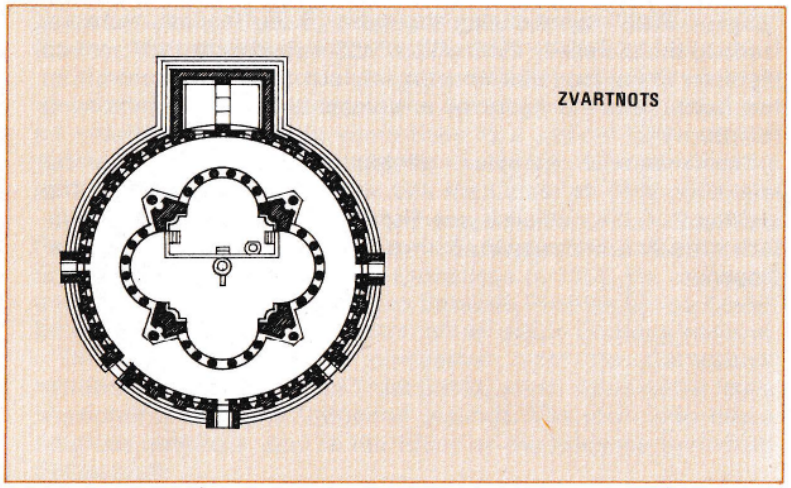
The memorial complex affords good opportunities for relaxation with its restaurant and small, comfortable hotel. The architect of the complex was Rafael Israelyan, and the sculptors were Ara Arutyunyan, Samvel Manasyan and Arsham Shaginyan.

ZVARTNOTS

We suggest that, on your way back to Yerevan, you stop and look at the ruins of the **Zvartnots Church**, roughly two kilometres from Echmiadzin. One of Armenia's architectural wonders, it was built over the years 641 to 661. Evidence survives that the Byzantine emperor Constantine III visited Armenia in 652 and was so taken with the church's beauty, that he wanted an identical church in his capital. Zvartnots' builder, whose name has unfortunately not survived, died en route to Constantinople.

The church stood for less than 300 years; in 930 there was a violent earthquake in Armenia, which left the masterpiece in ruins, but which nevertheless allow us to glean an impression of its originality and magnificence. Only in our imagination now can we gather the stones into a three-tiered church of unusually perfect form and beautiful carving, with which the entire church was decorated. Every inch of the outer arcade was covered with entrancing depictions of pomegranate branches, fruit and bunches of grapes.

The church had been so impressive that, at the beginning of the eleventh century, the Armenian architect Trdat was commissioned by Tsar Gagik I to build the Church of St. Gregory, an almost identical copy of the Zvartnots Church, by that time in ruins, in the town of Ani, capital of the Shirak kingdom.



While many records survive acclaiming the Zvartnots Church, "a church of astonishing grandeur", none of them give detailed descriptions. The appearance of the church was established after long studies by the architect Toros Toramanyan, who from 1904 took part in excavations. The three-tiered, pyramidal structure, crowned by a dome, must indeed have been an extraordinary sight. The church's originality lay in the fact that the architects took an innovative architectural step in building the even-sided cross in a round, externally multi-faceted, rather than rectangular, form. This idea had several structural faults, which made themselves felt during the earthquake.

The partiarch's palace adjoined the church, and from the wall sections still standing, we can easily guess at its design: entrance halls, living quarters and auxiliary rooms, cells for the people who worked in the church, a banquet hall and bath house.

Winepresses with vats marked out by stones are situated near the palace. Each of these vats holds four to five thousand litres of wine.

There is a small museum, opened in 1937, on the excavation site; its exhibits include a Greek inscription by Catholicos Nerses III about the building of the Zvartnots Church, a sun-dial carved on a stone slab which was part of the Church, various earthenware utensils from that period, and other objects found by archaeologists.

The museum is open daily from 10:00 to 16:00. Entrance is free.

LAKE SEVAN

Perhaps one of the most fascinating trips around Armenia is the one to Lake Sevan, one of nature's miracles lying 60 kilometres from Yerevan.

An excellent highway lying between wondrous mountains and cliffs, leads north; this is one of the most important routes in the republic, linking Armenia to neighbouring Azerbaijan and Georgia.

As you travel the first kilometres, you become aware of the effect of the surrounding mountains and high-lying land making the air clear and cool, especially pleasant after the stuffiness of the city in the hot months.

1. The Temple of the Sun, Garni
2. Fragment of the stone carving in the temple
3,5. The Cave Monastery, Gegard
4,6,7. The *khachkars*, erected to mark various important occasions, are unique to Armenia
8. The Church of St. Ripsime
9,10,11,12. Echmiadzin Cathedral
13,14,15. The memorial complex in Sardarpata
16,17,18,19. The ruins of the Zvartnots Church
20. Lake Sevan
21. Stone carving (fragment of a *khachkar*)
22. The monastery at Lake Sevan
23,24,25. Armenia is one of the world's most extraordinary museums: although a small country, it has over 4,000 stone monuments
26. The snowy caps of Mt. Ararat sparkling in the sun are an unforgettable sight

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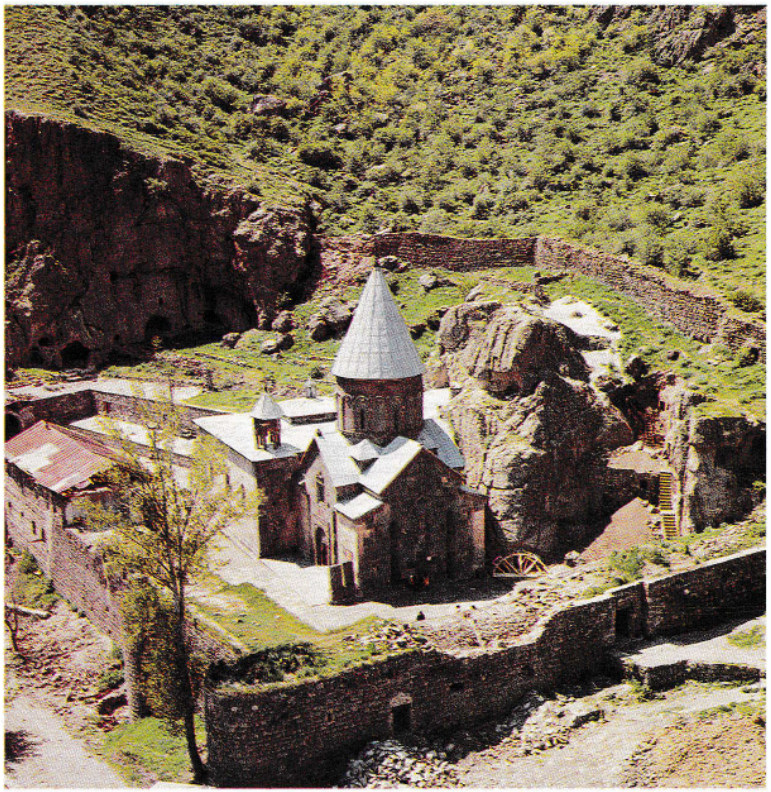

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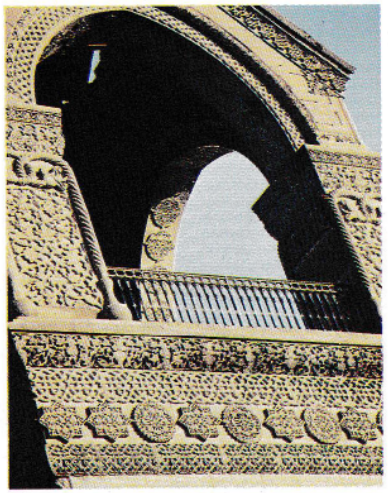

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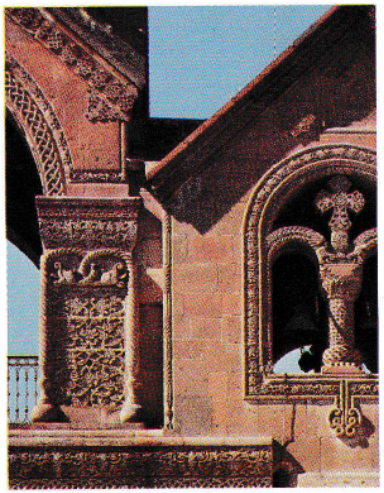

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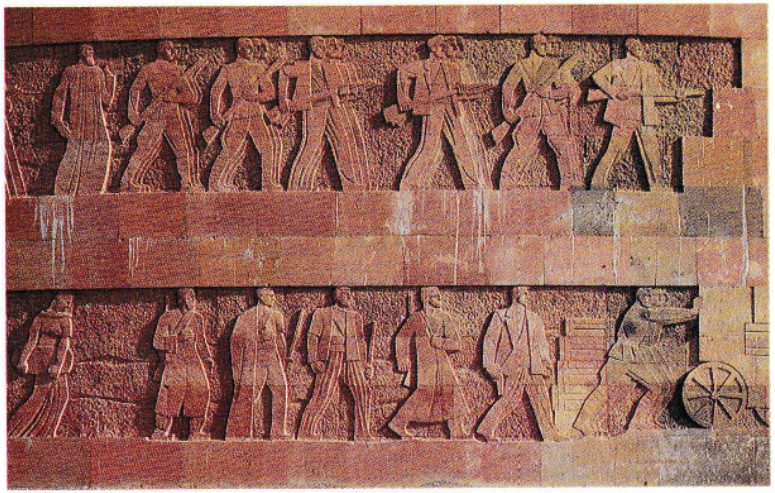

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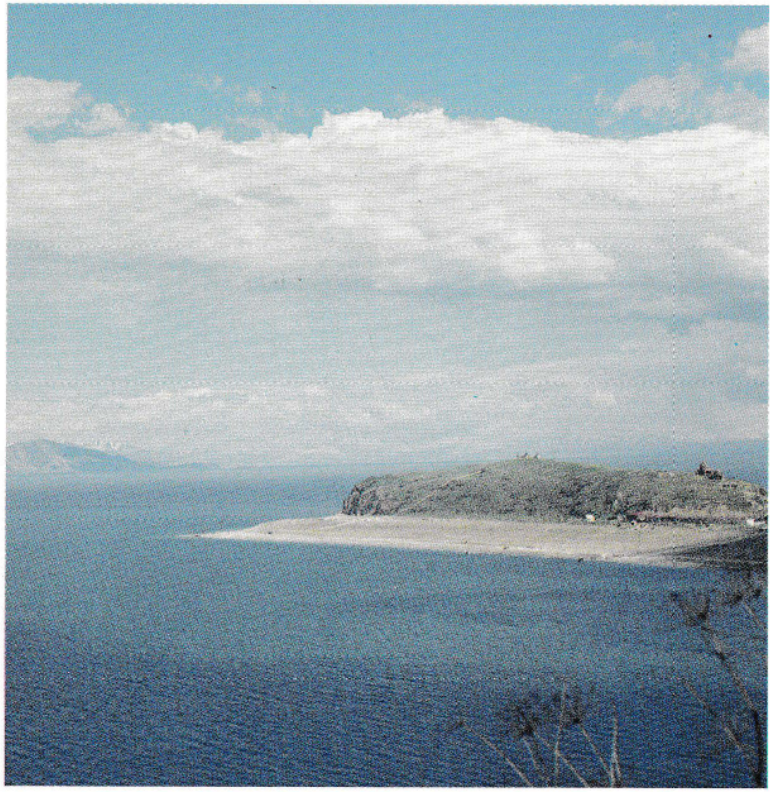

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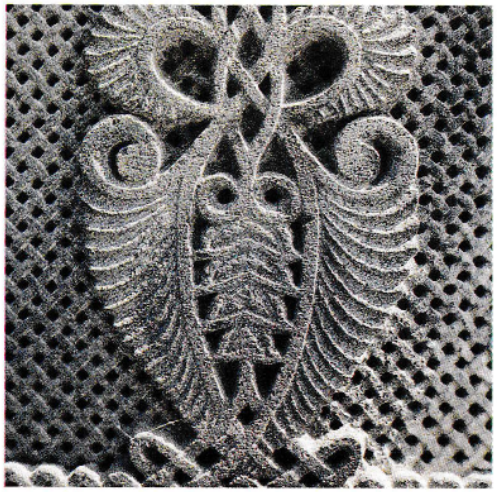

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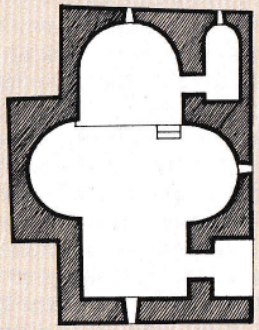
The smooth turquoise surface of the lake opens before you unexpectedly, from whichever direction you approach it. Sevan's austere grandeur is astonishing: it is difficult to believe that amidst this arid landscape, at a height of 2,000 metres, there lies a vast crater filled with life-giving moisture. Maxim Gorky had this to say: "The lake is like a piece of the sky which has come down to earth among the mountains."

Sevan is more than just part of the scenery: it is a symbol for the Armenia. It has been celebrated by poets, painted, and the sound of its waves has inspired composers. "Sevan is so beautiful that you want to drown in it!" exclaimed one Armenian poet, admiring the lake.

Nobody really knows how Lake Sevan was formed, although many experts — geologists, volcanic specialists, geomorphologists, and hydrologists—are currently engaged in finding the answer to that question. Some think that the lake formed in the crater of an extinct volcano, others try to prove that millions of years ago volcanic lava formed a natural dam, preventing the water from flowing out. There are many other hypotheses.

A folk tale tells another story: at one time a wood grew green and cultivated fields lay on the site of the present lake. A village stood there too, and not far away a cool spring bubbled. At that time water was precious, and the peasants found a means of blocking the source in order



MONASTERY AT LAKE SEVAN

to preserve the water. A young daughter-in-law once went for water, but when her pitcher was full, forgot to turn the spring off again. The water flooded all the land, and the people of the area placed a curse upon the girl responsible for the disaster. She was turned into the stone which now protrudes from the lake and is called Arsnakar (Daughter-in-Law's Stone).

Experts are concerned with more than Sevan's origins: they have a more serious problem on their hands. Over the last forty years the water level has dropped by almost 19 metres, and in some shallow places the lake has retreated from its shores by several kilometres.

The Sevan problem has been caused by Armenia's almost total lack of energy resources: the country has no coal, oil or gas. Industry began to develop when Soviet power emerged in the country, but was greatly hindered by this fact. Somebody recalled that at the beginning of this century the young engineer Sukias Manaseryan had devised an innovative plan to use Sevan's waters. Using this as a basis, experts put the small river Razdan, flowing out of the lake, to work. Its water was put into motion by the turbines of electric power stations built on the river, and it began to irrigate the arid Ararat Valley.

This was the origin of the Sevan-Razdan Falls, which have provided the republic with its own electricity and extensively irrigated thousands of hectares of once lifeless land.

But nothing lasts forever, even in the realm of nature. The lake began to shrink further and further from its shores, leaving a black and white mourning band behind. The reservoir decreased in size by 420 square kilometres, and Lake Sevan was threatened with slow death. For many years the lake had given bountifully of itself to the people, and now it was their turn to take care of the lake.

The River Arpa flows 48 kilometres from Sevan beyond the mighty crest of Mount Vardenis, and it was decided to dig a huge tunnel and redirect the Arpa's waters to Sevan. The tunnel is nearing completion, after work involving people of more than 29 Soviet nationalities. The USSR government has also passed a number of other laws to preserve Lake Sevan for future generations. Major new reservoirs are being built, and trees planted along the shores to reduce evaporation. Geophysicists have also come to Sevan's aid with a plan to induce artificial rain. Near the lake the Soviet Union's first meteotron has been built to conduct experiments on increasing rainfall in the Sevan basin.

The reduction in the water level did however make archaeologists and historians happy. Fragments of valuable ancient relics were unexpectedly found, including rock drawings

by the original inhabitants, domestic utensils, weapons and war chariots from Urartu times, which can be seen in the History Museum in Yerevan.

Until the artificially-induced water reduction, the lake was 75 kilometres in length and 56 kilometres in breadth at its widest point. The air here is cool and clear, and there are only 19 sunless days annually, compared to 122 and 54 in the famous resorts of Kislovodsk and Yalta respectively. The average water temperature in summer is 18-19 °C, which after midday in sheltered spots can be up to 20-22 °.

Lake Sevan is among the most popular recreation areas, the pure air and sandy beaches attracting many people. Those of you who enjoy sunbathing should remember, however, that the sun's rays are powerful here and moderate exposure is a wise idea.

Sevan has from ancient times been famous for its fish, the most renowned of which is its trout, which has decked the banquet tables of many rulers. It was often included in the tribute the Armenians had to pay their conquerors.

The Armenian name for the trout, *ishkhan* (meaning prince of fish), is derived from its crown-like spots. Gourmands say that the pale-pink flesh of the trout is even more delicious when cooked in water from the lake itself.

The area around Sevan, like other of Armenia's regions, has many sights worth seeing, the most interesting of these being the monastery perched on the cliffy slopes of the peninsula jutting out into the lake. One of its churches, called Arakelots (Church of the Apostles), is faced with roughly hewn stones, weathered by many centuries of sun, wind and rain. The *gavit*, now destroyed, was famous for its wooden capitals, now preserved in the Yerevan History Museum. Nearby stands the larger Astvatsatsin Church (Church of the Virgin), with more elaborate finishing.

The Sevan Monastery was founded in 874 by Tsar Ashot I, founder of the Bagratid dynasty and his daughter Mariam. The lake was a fine source of protection for it, because the peninsula was at that time an island, on which Armenians often sheltered from their enemies. Legend has it that on one occasion some Arabs attempted to capture the island, but a storm caught them unawares and destroyed their boats. Even today in bad weather Sevan shows the stormy side of its nature, washing the shore with waves two metres high.

Swift motorboats and comfortable hydrofoils will take you around the lake. Tourists can relax in the cafés and restaurants, the Akhtamar Hotel, the camping site and the Intourist motel with all facilities.

VALE OF WONDERS

It is time to move on, and as you look sadly round for the last time at Lake Sevan, this sea beyond the clouds, this blue fairytale, it shimmers under the sun and whispers its last farewell.

The road takes you up to the large **village of Tsovagyukh**, with its fine school, cultural centre and comfortable peasant houses. In the centre stands a statue of the Armenian writer Muratsan (1854-1908).

Clouds of mist float gently over the alpine meadows shrouded in a reverential silence broken only by the buzzing of bees. You are passing the **village of Semyonovka**, where arable farming and livestock breeding are the occupations of the inhabitants. Their ancestors moved here from distant Russia at the beginning of the nineteenth century and found a second homeland here in Armenia.

You are already 2,114 metres above sea level, the highest point on the Sevan Pass, and suddenly a breathtaking road snakes down from the clouds to a broad valley surrounded on all sides by the mountain ranges of the minor Caucasus, to what can only be described as a corner of paradise.

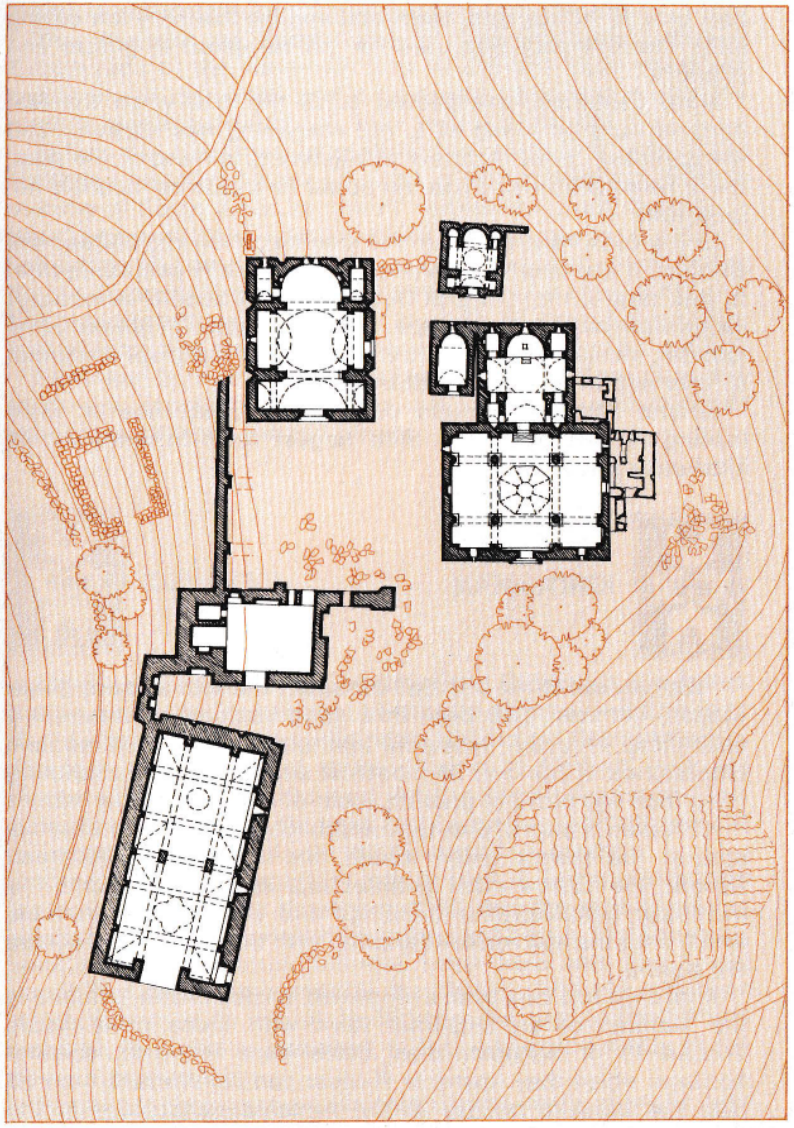
Dilizhan, one of Armenia's resort towns, is to be found here. Dilizhan's mild climate with moderately cool summers and warm, sunny winters, ozone-filled air and mineral springs, the waters of which are similar to the famous French Vichy waters, all help the town work miracles for invalids.

A cure is not the only reason to visit Dilizhan: the surrounding area also draws those interested in ancient history. To the north-west the quick-flowing Agartsin flows into the River Agstev. Travelling upstream for roughly seven kilometres you come upon the **Agartsin Monastery** (tenth to thirteenth centuries).

The buildings of this magnificent complex belong to what may be considered an original architectural school. The monastery was built over a period of three hundred years, and each generation of architects with enviable tact and taste developed the ideas of their predecessors, combining new buildings with the old and with the specific features of the landscape.

The earliest building is the tenth century Church of St. Gregory, noted for the variety of its architectural components and carving. In 1244, the small, homely Church of St. Stepanos was erected, the forms of which are largely repeated in the monastery's main Cathedral of Our Holy Lady (1281), a typically Armenian cross-shaped, domed building with splendid ornamentation.

AGARTSIN MONASTERY



The refectory (1248) one of the best examples of secular architecture in the Middle Ages, is considered to be the most original building. The talented architect Minas achieved an astonishing effect by using criss-cross arches which make the hall, only 20 metres long, seem vast and the relatively low ceiling lofty. The refectory was used for the reception of guests and pilgrims.

Many centuries have passed since the time when the first hammer rang on stone here: not everything has survived, and the grandeur of the Agartsin Monastery is a thing of the past, but it nevertheless still has the power to create an indelible impression.

Lovely **Lake Parzlich** lies in the mountains ten kilometres from Dilizhan. If you take the scenic path which leads eastwards from it, you come to the village of Gosh to find yet another monastery, called **Gor-Getik**, or **Goshavank**. It was so named in honour of its founder, Mkhitar Gosh (the twelfth century), the great Armenian scholar and writer of the Middle Ages.

Several highways radiate out from Dilizhan, one of them leading to Kirovakan, the third largest town in Armenia, 45 kilometres away.

KIROVAKAN

With access to rail and road transport, and also a nearby power station, the town has been in a good position to establish a flourishing industry, research institutes, design offices and laboratories. It has over 30 industrial enterprises manufacturing more than 400 types of product, most of which are exported.

Kirovakan is built of pink tufa, which looks particularly effective against the town's green woods and apple orchards. Kirov Square, the town's main architectural ensemble, houses the municipal administrative buildings and shops. Lenin Avenue, which links the new residential areas with the centre, runs across the square.

Kirovakan has long been a renowned holiday centre, combining the features of an industrial town with those of a resort. Thousands of schoolchildren come here for their summer holidays which they spend in Pioneer camps. Workers from all over the republic holiday in the Armenia Sanatorium in the

picturesque valley of the River Vanadzor, rest homes and boarding houses.

The town boasts a **Botanical Gardens** with 650 plant strains from various latitudes, and its collection of perennial flowering plants is particularly large.

The **Museum of Local Lore** is also of some interest. Excavations in the north-east part of the city have unearthed traces of the last stone and bronze ages. Sarcophagi from the ninth to eighth centuries B.C. have also been found.

Before the revolution Kirovakan (at that time it was called Karaklisa meaning "Black Church"; it was renamed in 1937 in memory of Sergei Kirov, prominent revolutionary and member of the Communist Party) had 3,-4,000 inhabitants. It now has a population of over 150,000 provided with their own professional theatre company, branches of higher educational establishments, two magnificent cultural centres, 15 clubs, 24 general education, four musical and three sports schools and their own art gallery.

Kirovakan is twinned with the French town of Bagneaux, and there are constant official, cultural, scientific and sporting exchanges between the two places.

IDZHEVAN

Idzhevan is situated 35 kilometres from Dilizhan in the Agstev Valley, along which an ancient trade route once passed. This is no doubt why the meaning of the name Idzhevan is "caravanserai". The town was thought of as the gateway to Armenia; caravans loaded with precious gifts from the East found shelter and rest here. As you approach the town today, you can see from afar the tall hotel, blending well with the mountainous scenery.

Idzhevan had an important role to play in Armenia's modern history. It was here in November, 1920, that the armed uprising against the bourgeois dashnak government began. The Armenian revolutionary committee informed Lenin from here that Soviet power had been established in the country. The old telephone which was used to convey to Moscow the text of the historic telegram is carefully preserved in the municipal History of the Revolution Museum.

Since that time, as in all Armenian towns, many changes have

taken place. Now the town is the major carpet manufacturer in Transcaucasia, producing 750,000 square metres of carpet annually. There are in addition wood treating and pentonite industry.

The Idzhevan district is also famous for its agriculture, the main crops being grapes, fruit and tobacco. The Idzhevan tobaccos are considered by experts to be among the most valuable strains. Mountain rivers in the area have made it possible to build some major reservoirs and establish an extensive irrigation system.

* * *

Here your guided tour to Yerevan and the surrounding area draws to a close. We hope that you have found it enjoyable, useful and informative. Whether you are now returning home or continuing your journey through Transcaucasia with new sights to see, we wish you *bon voyage*, and invite you to return in the future to Armenia with old man Ararat, blue Sevan and the pearly fountains of Yerevan.

As the Armenian saying goes: "It is not easy to leave Armenia, but it is more difficult still not to return again."

INFORMATION

HOTELS

Ani — 19, Sayat-Nova Avenue (prospekt Sayat-Novy)
Arabkir — 54, Komitas St. (ulitsa Komitasa)
Armenia — 1, Amiryan St. (ulitsa Amiryana)
Dvin — 40, Paronyan St. (ulitsa Paronyana)
Sevan — 8, Shahumyan St. (ulitsa Shahumyana)
Yerevan — 14, Abovyan St. (ulitsa Abovyana)
Tsitsernak International Tourist Base — 3rd St. (tretya ulitsa), Nork
Youth Centre Hotel — 1, Komeritakan St. (ulitsa Komeritakan)

THEATRES AND CONCERT HALLS

Children's Theatre— 3, Moskovyan St. (ulitsa Moskovyan)
Spendiarov Theatre of Opera and Ballet — 36, Tumanyan St. (ulitsa Tumanyana)
Stanislavsky Russian Theatre — 7, Abovyan St. (ulitsa Abovyana)
Sundukyan Theatre — 6, Karmirbanaki St. (ulitsa Karmir-banaki)
Tumanyan Puppet Theatre — 4, Sayat-Nova Avenue (prospekt Sayat-Novy)
Yerevan Theatre — 28, Isaakyan St. (ulitsa Isaakyana)
Chamber Music Hall — Boulevard Ring (Koltsevoi bulvar)
Large Philharmonic Concert Hall — 46, Lenin Avenue (prospekt Lenina)
Small Philharmonic Concert Hall — 2, Abovyan St
Circus — 5, 26 Commissars' St. (ulitsa 26 komisarneri)

MUSEUMS AND EXHIBITIONS

Armenian Folk Art Museum — 64, Abovyan St. (ulitsa Abovyana)
Armenian History Museum — Lenin Square (ploshchad Lenina)
Armenian Nature Museum — 12, Lenin Avenue (prospekt Lenina)
Armenian State Gallery — 1, Spandaryan St. (ulitsa Spandaryana)
Charents Museum of Literature and Art — 1, Spandaryan St.
Children's Picture Gallery—13, Abovyan St.
Erebuni Museum — 38, Erebuni St. (ulitsa Erebuni)
History of Yerevan Museum — 12, Lenin Avenue
Karapetyan Geological Museum — 10, Abovyan St.
Museum of the Revolution—Lenin Square
Soviet Armenia in the Great Patriotic War Museum—Akhtanak Park
Charents Memorial Museum — 17, Lenin Avenue
Demirchyan Memorial Museum — 29, Abovyan St.
Abovyan Museum — 4, 2nd St. (vtoraya ulitsa), Kanaker
Isaakyan Museum — 20, Plekhanov St. (ulitsa Plekhanova)
Saryan Museum — 3, Saryan St. (ulitsa Saryana)
Spendiarov Museum — 21, Nalbandyan St. (ulitsa Nalbandyana)
Tumanyan Museum — 40, Moskovyan St. (ulitsa Moskovyan)
Armenian Economic Achievements Exhibition — 43, Shiraki St. (ulitsa Shiraki)

CINEMAS

Abovyan — 13, 7th St. (sedmaya ulitsa), Kanaker
Airenik — 38, Ordzhonikidze Avenue (prospekt Ordzhonikidze)
Ani — 6, Sebastiya St. (ulitsa Sebastii)
Aragats — 18, Alabyan St. (ulitsa Alabyana)
David Sasunsky — 2, Bakvi St. (ulitsa Bakvi)
Gegard — 7th St. (sedmaya ulitsa), Avan
Komitas — 45, Komitas St. (ulitsa Komitasa)
Moskva — 18, Abovyan St. (ulitsa Abovyana)
Nairi — 50, Lenin Avenue (prospekt Lenina)
Nork — Ist District (pervy mikroraion), Nor Nork
Pioner — 19, Teryan St. (ulitsa Teryana)
Razdan — 8, Kievyan St. (ulitsa Kievyan)
Rossiya — 43, Marx St. (ulitsa Marksa)

Sevan — 47, Kalinin St. (ulitsa Kalinina)
Yerevan — 6, Oktemberyan Avenue (prospekt Oktemberyan)
Zvartnots — 6, Azatutyan Avenue (prospekt Azatutyana)

STADIUMS AND SPORTS FACILITIES

Nairi Stadium — 2, Tamantsineri St. (ulitsa Tamantsineri)
Razdan Stadium — Razdan river embankment
Respublikansky Stadium — 65, Knunyants St. (ulitsa Knunyantsa)
Chess Centre — 1, Lermontov St. (ulitsa Lermontova)
Cycle Track — 4, Karmir banaki St. (ulitsa Karmir banaki)
Dynamo Gymnasium — 69, Knunyants St.
Equestrian Centre — 41, Shiraki St. (ulitsa Shiraki)

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Architects' Union — 17, Barekamutyan St. (ulitsa Barekamutyan)
Artists' Union — 16, Abovyan St. (ulitsa Abovyana)
Art Workers' Union — 48, Lenin Avenue (prospekt Lenina)
Composers' Union — 25, Demirchyan St. (ulitsa Demirchyana)
Film-makers' Union — 20, Knunyants St. (ulitsa Knunyantsa)
Journalists' Union — 3a, Pushkin St. (ulitsa Pushkina)
Writers' Union — 3, Barekamutyan St.

SHOPS

Children's World Department Store — 32, Spandaryan St. (ulitsa Spandaryana)
Leninsky District Department Store — 55, Ordzhonikidze Avenue (prospekt Ordzhonikidze)
State Department Store — 8, Marx St. (ulitsa Marksa)

Tysyacha melochei (household goods) — 24, Tumanyan St. (ulitsa Tumanyana)
Jewellery may be bought in the following shops:
Manushak — 13, Tamantsineri St. (ulitsa Tamantsineri)
Oniks — 45, Oktemberyan Avenue (prospekt Oktemberyan)
Ureni — 21, Abovyan St. (ulitsa Abovyana)
Records and photographic equipment may be bought at 8, Sayat-Nova Avenue
Shoes may be bought at 4, Knunyants St. (ulitsa Knunyantsa)
Musical instruments may be bought at 10, Sayat-Nova Avenue
Sports equipment may be bought at 5, Lenin Avenue (prospekt Lenina)
Everything for the tourist may be found at 20, Oktemberyan Avenue
Foreign currency shops:
Tsitsernak — 8, Sayat-Nova Avenue (prospekt Sayat-Novy)
Souvenirs — 3, Amiryan St. (ulitsa Amiryana)
In the Dvin Hotel — 40, Proshyan St. (ulitsa Proshyana)
Echmiadzin — near the Cathedral's entrance

RESTAURANTS

Ani — 19, Sayat-Nova Avenue (prospekt Sayat-Novy)
Aragats — Akhtanak Park (Akhtanak park)
Ararat — 3, Sverdlov St. (ulitsa Sverdlova)
Argishti — 18, Lenin Avenue (prospekt Lenina)
Armenia — 1, Amiryan St. (ulitsa Amiryana)
Masis — 8, Karmir banaki St. (ulitsa Karmir banaki)
Praga — 54b, Komitas St. (ulitsa Komitasa)
Sevan — 8, Marx St. (ulitsa Marksa)

CAFÉS

Araks — 11, Abovyan St. (ulitsa Abovyana)
Armenia — Lenin Square, (ploshchad Lenina)
Dier-Chaupron — 22, Isaakyan St. (ulitsa Isaakyana)
Flora — Boulevard Ring (Koltsevoi bulvar)

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Information — 09
Airport Information Desk — 007
Rail Information — 004
Talking Clock — 10
Centre for Foreign Tourism — 52-68-46
Yerevan Intourist Office — 52-53-73
Armenian Committee for the Defence of Peace — 52-63-83
Armenian Council for Tourism and Excursions — 56-16-21
Armenian Society of Friendship and Cultural Links with Foreign Countries — 56-45-14
Committee for Cultural Links with Armenians Abroad — 52-55-80
Committee for the Reception of Armenians Returning from Abroad — 52-56-41
Committee for Youth Organisations — 53-34-21

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